



News from: **Office of the Mayor Libby Schaaf**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STATEMENT FROM OAKLAND MAYOR LIBBY SCHAAF RE: Community Outpouring over Deaths in Minnesota, Louisiana and Texas**

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“You can’t see what we’ve seen these past few years – with the most recent deaths this week outside St. Paul and in Baton Rouge – and in Dallas – and not know that something is terribly broken with how we administer the force of law and mete out justice in our country.

“As a white woman, I can’t pretend to understand fully the pain, the anger, the frustration and the fear that many in our communities of color feel right now and have felt for centuries as they try to live free. As a civilian, I don’t know intimately how police officers around the country and their families are grieving right now and worrying about what the next day in uniform will bring. But as your Mayor, what I do understand is the need to change this reality because neither our communities, nor law enforcement can continue on this trajectory we’re on.

“I have talked often of how Oakland is trying to change this narrative, the progress we’ve made in principled policing in Oakland and about the fact that it’s still not enough as evidenced by our police department’s most recent struggles, but this is not the time for that discussion. Now is the time to give people a safe space to grieve – the time to be in community with one another so we can truly move forward.

“I am asking faith based leaders in Oakland to open the doors of their places of worship so community members can come together. I am asking Oakland’s arts community and the leaders of other gathering spaces across our city to open their doors as well. I hope neighbors will be inspired to come together in their homes too, to talk honestly about what has been happening.

“I am also encouraging residents in Oakland to post video testimonials to the City’s and the Mayor’s Facebook pages so

we can give public voice to the private pain so many are feeling right now and gather the community's feedback using #BlackLivesMatter and #OakVoices.

"I know these gatherings and activities won't be the path everyone chooses tonight or in the days ahead. Some will take to the streets. I ask that those who do, do so in a way that is peaceful and not destructive so as to do no further harm to our community, which like so many other cities is in pain right now. Facilitating peaceful free expression, keeping peace on our streets and protecting the safety of Oakland residents and businesses remain our goals."

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