



Franklin Roundtable

Promoting Individual Liberty and Limited Government

June 8, 2020

Hon. Brian P. Kemp
Office of the Governor
203 Capitol Place, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

RE: Open Letter to Governor Kemp concerning Civil Unrest in Atlanta

Dear Governor Kemp,

We, as board members of Franklin Roundtable, wish to convey our concern over the recent events surrounding the deaths of George Floyd in Minnesota and Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia and the resulting reactions here in Georgia.

First, let us express our great sadness at the tragic deaths of these two men. Although the resulting legal actions have not yet worked their way through the justice system, both incidents appear to be appalling murders. In the case of George Floyd, there was a particularly nauseating case of cruelty by the police officers involved, and we unequivocally support the prosecution of those criminal offenders to the full extent of the law.

Furthermore, Franklin Roundtable strongly supports the First Amendment rights of all citizens to peacefully assemble, exercise free speech and protest the policies of governments at all levels, provided doing so brings no harm to another citizen's natural and constitutionally-protected rights to life, liberty and property. However, what began as righteous, peaceful protests quickly devolved into violent, nationwide pandemonium over the last week. Far from being spared of this phenomenon, Georgia has become a hot spot for such dangerous hostilities.

We cannot ignore the blatant disregard for the law committed by some who attended the protests. At some events described as protests, we have witnessed and heard reports of individuals destroying property, threatening the safety of others and committing other acts of aggression in order to achieve a political end.

Emerging evidence suggests that the ubiquitous violence is not only being carefully coordinated but financed by a sophisticated operation in a perverse exploitation of the Floyd and Arbery tragedies. For example, pallets of bricks have been transported to multiple sites across the country where there are no pending construction projects, but where so-called protesters are intending to "demonstrate." Recent news coverage of the riots is replete with accounts of bricks being thrown at police officers. Within just 48 hours of George Floyd's death, there was a mass distribution of shirts bearing logos such as "I CAN'T BREATHE." Many protesters are transported from remote, out-of-state locations to participate in the so-called demonstrations.

Several other "protesters" have been photographed wearing earpieces and security-type communication devices.

While many people have gathered to genuinely express understandable anger and frustration, there seem to be devious forces behind the scenes, such as Antifa, that are coordinating a destructive movement as opposed to simply exercising rights of free speech.

The criminality and domestic terrorism unfolding before our eyes does not merely harm certain individuals and specific businesses. It broadly undermines the Rule of Law and consequently threatens the very fabric of our society. Clearly, this is the objective of some of those who are engaging in these unlawful acts. Governor Tim Walz (D) of Minnesota drew this precise conclusion when he recently characterized the growing violence as an “organized attempt to destabilize civil society.” History demonstrates that if movements like this are tolerated – *even to a small extent* – they can metastasize quickly and inflict existential harm.

First and foremost among the most sacred duties of government is the protection of its citizens’ lives, liberty and property.

Accordingly, Franklin Roundtable encourages your office to use its powers and agencies of state government to bring to justice those responsible for financing, planning, coordinating and carrying out the unlawful acts we have witnessed in Atlanta. We support policy changes, such as upgrading the rules of engagement for law enforcement to reflect a “Zero Tolerance” approach that includes the use of appropriate force.

Furthermore, we call for the State of Georgia to work collaboratively with federal law enforcement agencies to prosecute all individuals and organizations that are bankrolling this savage mayhem, whether they are situated in Georgia, other U.S. states or in foreign territories.

By this letter, Franklin Roundtable further conveys its stalwart support for your efforts to bring to justice those responsible for the violent civil unrest we witnessed in Atlanta.

Finally, we suggest that policies and procedures be crafted in Georgia to ensure our civilian police forces do not use excessive force, of the kind that ostensibly killed George Floyd.

Please let us know what actions your administration will be taking to ensure domestic tranquility in our state.

Thank you for your hard work and service on behalf of all our citizens.

Sincerely,

FRANKLIN ROUNDTABLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Jim Jess, Chairman



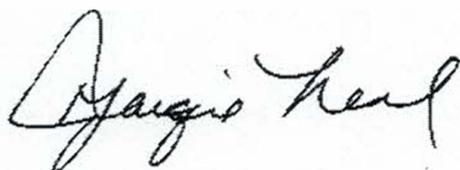
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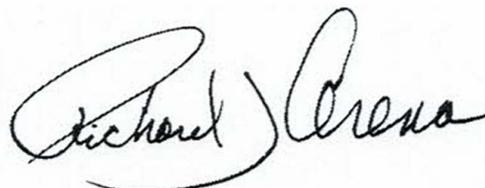
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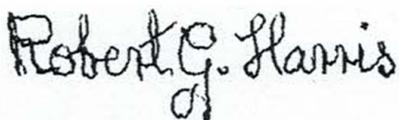
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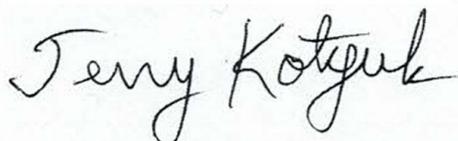
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