

A Statement on Racial Justice and Equality from Gibson Dunn Chairman and Managing Partner, Ken Doran

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Our communities are being torn apart by incidents of unspeakable racism. As these incidents grow in number so, too, grows the legitimate anger, hurt, distrust, fear and public outrage of those in our community who have been targeted. These incidents include, but are not limited to, the death of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25 year old African-American who was shot while jogging through a neighborhood in southeast Georgia, the death of Breonna Taylor, a 26 year old African American woman killed by police after they forcefully entered her home on a no-knock warrant, and the recent death of George Floyd, a 46 year old African American man who was murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mr. Floyd was in police custody – handcuffed and lying on the ground in prone position when one of the arresting officers placed his knee on the back of Mr. Floyd’s neck and kept it there for nearly nine minutes with other officers watching. Mr. Floyd repeatedly called out that he could not breathe and onlookers protested that his life was in jeopardy. Mr. Floyd suffocated and died from these injuries. Both the death of Mr. Arbery and Mr. Floyd were captured on videotape which is very hard to watch, and impossible to justify.

These traumatic events and resulting unrest during a global pandemic have left many of us at a loss and with an overwhelming sense of despair, anger, fear and helplessness during these trying times. I know that many of our colleagues are struggling on a very personal level with these heinous tragedies and inequities. We, at Gibson Dunn, stand with our colleagues and will fight racism wherever we see it as we continue to defend the rule of law, civil liberties and equal justice for all. Our lawyers have been encouraged to take up that mantle, through pro bono efforts, charitable giving, or otherwise. Our firm is already engaged in a variety of matters that impact on racial justice issues, including tackling police reform and criminal justice reform. We know that there is much more work to be done and we are not doing nearly enough, but I do believe that we have arrived at a pivotal moment in the fight for racial equality and I am proud to say that Gibson Dunn will play a prominent role in that fight.

As an initial step, Gibson Dunn will contribute \$100,000 to the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (LDF). LDF is America’s premier legal organization fighting for racial justice and has been a long-standing beacon of hope for communities of color. Through litigation, advocacy, and public education, LDF seeks structural changes to expand democracy, eliminate disparities, and achieve racial justice in a society that fulfills the promise of equality for all Americans. Gibson Dunn’s very own Ambassador Ron Kirk serves on LDF’s Board of Directors. We are proud to stand alongside Ron in supporting LDF’s important work.

Martin Luther King, Jr. notably stated "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." In my communication earlier this year celebrating Dr. King’s life and legacy, I wrote that Dr. King’s work "is an amazing gift to the world – challenging the status quo and its many inequalities, yet he was hopeful, optimistic, empowering and inspirational about a better world that lies ahead." Gibson Dunn is committed to ensuring

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that a better and more equitable world lies ahead.

Stay safe and healthy, and stand strong.

Kenneth M. Doran
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