



State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

Respect...Integrity...Effective Communication

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Maryland Commission on Civil Rights Executive Director Cleveland L. Horton II Statement Condemning Political Violence & Honoring 9/11

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights condemns, in the strongest possible terms, all acts of political violence, including those connected to the tragic death of Charlie Kirk. While our ideologies and beliefs may differ, the sanctity of human life must always remain above division. We must never forget that every life has value.

As our nation pauses to remember the lives lost on September 11, 2001, we are reminded of the devastating consequences when hatred and violence are allowed to prevail. That day showed us the fragility of life and the urgent need to rise above anger and destruction. It also revealed the power of unity – how people of every background, belief, and community came together in the face of tragedy to affirm our shared humanity.

Our nation cannot afford to normalize hatred or excuse violence as a solution to our differences. Violence has never, and will never, be the answer to our divisions. Violence is not strength – it is weakness. It silences dialogue, destroys communities, and betrays the very principles of democracy and human dignity. It erodes the foundations of our democracy, diminishes our humanity, and undermines the progress we strive to build together.

We must do better. Each of us – whether in positions of leadership, influence, or simply as neighbors – carries a responsibility not only to reject rhetoric that dehumanizes others, but also to resist the urge to treat opponents as enemies. True courage is not found in anger or aggression; it is found in the hard work of listening, building understanding, and pursuing justice without resorting to harm.

In this moment, and in honor of the memory of those we lost on 9/11, we call on all people, regardless of political affiliation, background, or perspective, to recommit to the principles of respect, dignity, and peaceful engagement. Only by choosing dialogue over destruction and understanding over intolerance can we move forward as a stronger, more united community. If we are to honor life and strengthen the bonds of our shared humanity, then we must choose peace over violence, respect over contempt, and unity over division.

“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”

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