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The League of Women Voters of Clark County condemns the remarks made last week by District Court Judge Darvin Zimmerman in the wake of the fatal shooting of Kevin Peterson Jr. during a police stop.

Aligning with the official positions of the nonpartisan national and state League of Women Voters, the local League supports a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, and transparent, and which fosters public trust at all stages.

We additionally believe that our courts must be fair, efficient, accessible and staffed with qualified personnel. The comments attributed to Judge Zimmerman cast serious doubt about whether the judge can perform his duties in that spirit.

It should be further noted that the state of Washington's Commission on Judicial Conduct stipulates a "judge shall perform the duties of judicial office, including administrative duties, without bias or prejudice."

According to the Code of Judicial Ethics, "a judge shall not, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, or engage in harassment, and shall not permit court staff, court officials, or others subject to the judge's direction and control to do so."

Mr. Zimmerman's term on the bench is scheduled to continue until the end of 2022. But the statements he acknowledges making, despite his apology, raise serious questions about his fitness for the position.

The League of Women Voters of Clark County is a nonpartisan, grassroots civic organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to all. With 100 years of experience, the League is one of America's oldest and most trusted civic nonprofit organizations.

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