

*I have been authorized to provide this response from Judge Zimmerman*

I deeply regret my statements which caused divisiveness and concern in the community that I love and serve. I have always prided myself in being open minded, fair and just in my duties as a judicial officer. I do understand that even my personal comments, when made public - bring about an outcry of concern because I am a judicial officer. In my 35 years as a jurist, I have long been a supporter of therapeutic programs that help the impoverished; I have been a promoter and speaker for Veteran's Court; Mental Health Court and pre arrest diversion programs. I am a staunch supporter of programs that provide alternatives to incarceration which affect people of color and the impoverished.

I have spoken at hundreds of meetings supporting alternative programs to incarceration. I recognize the injustice that befalls men and women of color as well as non native English speaking litigants. I have recommended resources to litigants including Clark College language programs for immigrants who come to court and cannot speak the language. They suffer too because they cannot understand the system and what is happening to them. I have taken a proactive approach to help everyone in my courtroom because I truly believe that there is a better way for justice to be had.

All of these programs that I have supported and encouraged are meant to bring fair and equal justice to all races and genders. In that moment, after court, in a private conversation, I was speaking as a father, about my concerns the delay by 5 months for the investigation to be completed; of a need for closure about Mr. Peterson's death, which was very tragic, and why it is necessary for that information released to the public to be accurate, so that everyone, including the police get a fair evaluation of what happened.

My concerns as a father do not excuse the fact that my comments caused an already volatile community to again become divisive. I am very sorry for that. I have decided to take some time off to reflect on my behavior and to determine what I can do to help heal the community I have served. I have self reported my statements to the Commission that oversees my actions as a jurist and will fully cooperate with their investigation. I want my colleagues and the public to know that I have accepted responsibility for my actions

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