



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2022

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OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT

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DON'T MAKE DEMOCRACY WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!

DETROIT – *“In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for rigorous and positive action,”* Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These are the haunting words for a troubled generation of Americans. Amidst the never-ending diatribes of congressional leaders who reject the very constitution they are sworn to uphold (147 Republicans voted to sustain objections to the certification of the 2020 election, along with 8 Republican U.S. Senators). Some even called the violent, criminal insurrectionists patriots. While at the same time they label American’s who believe in the rule of law un-patriotic. This is no longer shocking and must not be considered unbelievable. Democracy is on the chopping block. It is fueled by lies, death, violence, and constant intimidation. The people must not be lulled into a state of mental hibernation. We cannot simply remain unconscious hoping to be awakened when the political storms of this era have passed over.

“Tell a lie loud enough and long enough and people will believe it. By means of shrewd lies, unremittingly repeated, it is possible to make people believe that heaven is hell and hell heaven. The greater the lie, the more readily it will be believed,” Adolf Hitler. Have we not learned anything from this tyrant of history? Over 60 courts have ruled that the election of 2020 was not stolen, and the current President Joseph R. Biden was duly elected by a majority of Americans and certified by the electoral college. Yet, we still argue about the legitimacy of the election. Candidates running for governor, secretary of state, attorney general, and state legislators are seeking to lead our states and take over the election process. If they do not win, their intent is to change the final outcomes of elections. They seek to overturn the will of the people. Examples are Kari Lake, gubernatorial candidate in Arizona who said, she would *“decertify the 2020 election.”* The extremist anti-semitic candidate for governor in Pennsylvania Doug Mastriano, who also would not certify the election, has attacked his Jewish opponent Josh Shapiro for sending his child to a Jewish religious school. In his latest attack, Mastriano said, *“women who violate the abortion ban should be charged with murder.”* Here in the state of Michigan, two militia men were convicted on charges of kidnapping conspiracy as well as the conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction, threatening the life of Governor Gretchen Whitmer. According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Nils R. Kessler, *“They didn’t just want to kidnap her. They wanted to put Gretchen Whitmer on trial, kill her, and begin a second Civil War, something that they called the boogaloo.”* Kristina Karamo, candidate for the Michigan Secretary of State, said the *“2020 election was beset by rampant voter fraud and the Democratic Party has been taken over by a satanic agenda. Our election cycle has been a robbery. We must stand up and fight back.”* A special election commission headed by Republicans filed a report indicating there was no evidence of voter fraud. The ex-president Donald Trump travels the country fomenting violence, threatening retribution on those who seek to bring his crimes to justice. He is constantly debasing every institution from the news media monitoring him, the FBI and Justice Departments investigating him, the court system which will try him, to the people of the nation who ultimately will judge him.

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Democracy Too Late

We all have a stake in the maintaining of our democracy and the freedom which it guarantees. The unashamed, overt, vicious attacks upon minorities and women to score political points and gain elective office is taking no prisoners. Senator Tommy Tuberville of Alabama made his fortune off the backs, legs, arms, sweat, and blood of Black football players at both Auburn and Alabama Universities. He claims in a most racist rant, Blacks which he makes synonymous with criminality, wants reparations for enslavement and for the segregation they have systematically suffered. According to him, they *"want to control what you have. They want reparations because they think the people that do crime are owed that. Bullshit."* This racist dogma typifies the thinking of many who are bathed in a swamp of white supremacist ideology and fed a steady diet of *'close your doors because here they come'*. Former President Lyndon B. Johnson said it well, *"if you can convince the lowest white man he's better than the best colored man, he won't know you are picking his pocket. Hell, give him someone to look down on and he'll empty his pockets for you."*

For those who believe preserving democracy should not be a priority please note if you don't have a democracy then nothing else will matter. Your free movement, hourly wages, civil rights, corporate capitol, business affiliation, religious participation, and educational elevation can be dictated by those who have a singular interest, themselves. To say the upcoming election is not important is most foolish and indeed thoughtless. The ability of the January 6 Commission to investigate tyranny and the attempt to overthrow our government by a twice impeached would-be fascist despot and his mob of insurrectionists is a product of our democracy. The search and seizure of stolen national security documents belonging to the U.S. Government from his home in Mar-a-Lago and possibly other places, is a product of our democracy. The usurping of women's right to choose by an extremist supreme court is a product of our democracy. The codifying of Roe vs. Wade and the right to check it at the state level is also a product of our democracy. The long overdue statehood for Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico must become products of our democracy. African Americans can't sit this out. Latinos can't sit this out. No minorities and any people who believe in freedom and justice can afford to sit this out. Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson on the U.S. Supreme Court is a product of our democracy. More federal judges of color appointed in our nation's history by this administration is a product of our democracy. The Infrastructure Bill of 2021 is a product of our democracy. It impacts you and your families. The recent presidential pardon of 6,500 Americans incarcerated for the simple possession of marijuana under federal laws is a product of our democracy. It signals to state governments that you should follow the lead established by the federal government.

This will impact thousands of Black and brown folks caught in a web that keeps them from good jobs, housing, and educational opportunities. Let's not get this twisted. This is not just about President Biden. Although let's be clear. He is the President for such a time as this resulting in these policies. This is about any future President and whether our democracy will remain America's historic policy. No one can sit this out. The senatorial election in Georgia typifies the very serious thread by which our democracy is still held. An unqualified, mentally challenged (according to his own words) individual Herschel Walker has contradicted the very policies he advocates by his personal life. He should be nowhere near as a non-reputable challenger to the current Senator Raphael Warnock. This says more about the people who are supporting Walker than the extraordinary qualifications exemplified by Warnock. We must not reduce ourselves to power over principal, personality over quality, and political manipulation over people participation. Don't give evil and self-destruction a direct pathway to your own de-construction. Don't believe that you are not on the list. The words of The Greatest Muhammad Ali *"float like a butterfly, and sting like a bee,"* characterizes the lessons to be learned from the late theologian Martin Niemöller for those who care to see. *"First, they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out, because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionist, and I did not speak out, because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out, because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak for me."* This madness is floating all around us. The sting is real. I'm reminded of the old African proverb, *"even the smallest deed is better than the greatest intention."* Now is the time for our deeds and not our intentions. **Take Your Soles To The Polls And Vote! DON'T MAKE DEMOCRACY WAIT UNTIL IT'S MUCH TOO LATE!**

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