Statements Condemning the Attempt to Overthrow Our Government with Violence by Blocking the Lawful Vote Count

National Council of Nonprofits – Statement on Events at the U.S. Capitol

“American democracy came under siege today. America’s charitable organizations are united in opposition to the actions of the mob that stormed the ultimate symbol of democracy, the U.S. Capitol. The First Amendment protects the right to peaceably assemble and to petition government for a redress of grievances. It does not protect those who planned, participated, and incited a mob to act with violence rather than act peacefully and delivered insurrection instead of petitions. As we all take a step back and call for calm, we should also resolve to hold violators accountable for their unlawful actions to prevent further outbreaks. In a democracy, disagreement is natural. Debate is healthy. But violence and mob rule are unacceptable.”

Foraker Group (Alaska)

“Democracy is at the core of who we are as nonprofits. Today we stand with civil society and a peaceful transition in our democratic process. We keep our congressional leaders and their staff in our hearts and hope for their safety.”

Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits

“The Alliance firmly believes in our democratic system and that everyone benefits when all people are able to participate in that process. We deplore the violence at the U.S. Capitol, and as Americans, believe that civility and our American system and principles will prevail. We are keeping our Congressional leaders, their staff and those protecting them in our hearts. Democracy is at the core of who we are as nonprofits. We remain committed to our mission to support and provide assistance to nonprofits across Arizona.”

Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement

“Yesterday, our democracy was tested on the steps of our Nation’s Capitol. That democracy, as fragile as it is in this moment, held firm. At DANA, we celebrate our democracy and all the freedoms it provides to us as Americans – freedoms that include the right to Voice and Vote. These freedoms do not extend to violence. What occurred on January 6, 2021 is unacceptable and we condemn the violence.

We celebrate the courage of those who raise their voices, vote, and take reasonable and peaceful actions to make the world a better place. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who experienced loss and injury.”
Nonprofit missions focus on creating stronger communities and bettering the lives of those around us. We need to come together as nonprofits and continue to do the hard work of healing our communities, for this will be what keeps our democracy strong.”

Kentucky Nonprofit Network

“As our nation wrestles with the aftermath of the attack on our democracy, KNN joins countless voices across our state and nation in firmly denouncing the violent siege of the U.S. Capitol. We remain committed to ensuring that all voices are heard - not just nonprofit voices, but the voices of the Kentuckians you serve. It is because we believe that every voice is essential that we partner with you to engage in efforts that promote voter registration and engagement, as well as devoted extensive resources to secure a complete and accurate 2020 census count.

The fragility of our democracy was revealed on Wednesday and it is clear, once again, that there is so much more work to do. This should only strengthen the resolve of the nonprofit sector to remain committed to do our part to protect the democratic process, dismantle racism and use our nonpartisan voices to promote civil discourse and healing in this nation.

If your nonprofit is committed to this work of reimagining a future where we can all thrive together, know that KNN is with you - every step of the way.”

Maryland Nonprofits – We Stand for Democracy and Against White Nationalism

“Maryland Nonprofits condemns the violent breach of the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021 and the systemic conditions that made such a horrific and dangerous event possible. We call on our elected leaders to hold accountable all those who were involved in planning, supporting, and abetting this attack on our democracy.

The gross inequities of the events of January 6 underscore how differently white people are treated by law enforcement in America than Black and brown people. The stark contrast in how gently yesterday’s events were handled, compared to the brutal response to Black Lives Matter protests last summer, fully exposes systemic injustice. Had the people who scaled the walls of the Capitol yesterday been Black or identifiably Muslim, we are certain that far more people would have been killed and injured. It was not long ago that a Black woman, Miriam Carey, drove her car into a security barrier at the White House. The Capitol Police fired 26 bullets, hitting Miriam five times and killing her while her baby was strapped into the car seat.

These events demonstrate the often dramatically different experiences faced by white and Black Americans each day. This is something that each of us is called upon to improve. All Americans are at risk when law enforcement systemically looks the other way from white crime, just as we are all at risk when overly violent tactics are used on Black and brown people. While we are calling on our law enforcement agencies to enforce existing laws more equitably, we recognize an urgent need to build new structures, systems, and agencies to help advance a more just world.

President Donald Trump must be held fully accountable for his incitement of and loving response toward militant seditionists, and his intentional acts to thwart the will of the people and the requirements of the Constitution.

The movement to disrupt our democracy is rooted in white nationalism that is growing in the US and around the world. We have seen, time and again, that when Black-led, multi-
racial movements make progress – such as during the Black Lives Matter and civil rights movements – the forces that seek to maintain systems of oppression push back. The white slaveowners of the Confederate south sought to destroy the US through secession and war rather than abolish slavery, and it is not a coincidence that the Confederate flag was flown proudly by the white mob at the Capitol, in addition to other unspeakable hate symbols of anti-Semitism, the Ku Klux Klan, and white power that were on display.

As Angela Davis said, freedom is a constant struggle. Yet there is no reason to struggle alone. We all have a role to play in delivering true liberty and justice for everyone. Maryland Nonprofits’ mission is to advance equity and quality of life by leveraging the strength and collective action of the nonprofit community. Our board and staff are united in standing boldly with the forces for racial equity and justice, and for our democracy.

As we move forward from the grief and losses of the pandemic and the exhaustion of a seemingly endless stream of “unprecedented” events, our charitable community remains a vital beacon of action, support, and hope for each other and the communities we serve. Together, we double our efforts to support democracy, oppose racism in all its forms, defend and advance voting rights, and advocate for equity and systems change at national and state levels. We are heartened that our Congress returned to session and worked past 3 AM to complete the certification of the 2020 election results. Our nation will never be the same after what happened on January 6, 2021, and the underlying systemic failures revealed by the pandemic will require us to reimagine our future. If we commit to our collective work and remain true to our values, we will emerge a stronger and more equitable nation.

**Michigan Nonprofit Association** **Condemns Violence at the U.S. Capitol**

“We at Michigan Nonprofit Association believe in our democratic system and the upholding of free and fair elections. We believe that our communities benefit when all people are able to participate in the democratic process. We condemn the violence unfolding at the U.S. Capitol, and we trust that our civil society will prevail.”

**Minnesota Council of Nonprofits – MCN denounces insurrection at U.S. Capitol**

“As did the world, the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) watched with concern and anguish at yesterday’s violent siege of the U.S. Capitol, a long-standing symbol of this nation’s democratic ideals. We join countless voices across our state and nation in firmly denouncing any and all acts that threaten the core tenets of democracy, including the peaceful transition of power resulting from free and open elections.

Another vital pillar on which our country was founded exists in the First Amendment right to peaceful assembly to petition government. But what occurred in Washington D.C. yesterday looked, sounded, and felt different, because it was. The acts of aggression flooding the U.S. Capitol and washing across our screens were antithetical to the imperative need to overcome the growing divide, acts of violence, and existing disparities facing our country.

The response by law enforcement to Wednesday’s insurrection stands in stark contrast to many of the experiences of Black communities, Indigenous communities, and communities of color attempting to seek justice. Yesterday was another reminder of how white supremacy is interwoven into our political and social systems, but we stand firm in our commitment that white supremacy should have no place in our democracy.
Nonprofit organizations have a stake in shaping this pivotal moment, as we use freedoms afforded in our democracy every day in pursuit of a healthy, cooperative, and just society. We play a critical role in promoting active community participation, lifting up voices not often heard, and dismantling systemic racism wherever it is found. As builders of community, nonprofits will continue to reimagine a future where we can all thrive together. It is the linchpin of why we exist, our reason for being.

As we fight for our democratic principles, we fight just as valiantly for the rights of each of our neighbors to freely and safely pursue their dreams and voice in America. MCN will continue to engage in this difficult, necessary work with everyone that recognizes the benefits and responsibilities of a democracy.”

Montana Nonprofit Association – Open letter from CEO

“Many of us are watching events unfold in Washington DC today that we would not have dreamed could happen. I’m shaken. Our team is shaken. We are trying to understand what we’re seeing in the absence of a template.

We have faced such significant duress and instability over the past ten months - to the extent that we don't have a reserve left to help us navigate a situation that defies imagination. As we grapple with what to do or say, we’re left with the simplest of responses in the moment: care for ourselves and care for one another, our constituents, our communities. None of us has a solution today large enough to meet the magnitude of this moment, but as a community we can find comfort and a path forward in our care for one another.

As I wrote this, I found myself googling a ridiculous question, “Is there a reassuring quote to offer during a time of national tragedy?” Then I laughed at myself and came back to what I believe to be true, “No matter the question, love is the answer.” Not big love with a capital “L”, but little loves – like calling my daughter to check in, taking a walk to reground, sending a note to my colleagues, taking the dog to play fetch, or turning the news off and curling up for a nap. Whatever plants my feet a little more firmly on the ground. It's not a panacea and it doesn't address the biggest and most complex issues. It's simply what can be done right this minute.

From all of us at MNA, we’re thinking of you. We know even in the midst of surreal events you are still finding food for the hungry, sheltering the unhoused, watching out for the kids, and otherwise carrying on with the business of life. You are grace in the world. You are the muscle of our democracy. May you too find that little thing, call it love, hope, a good cry, or a good laugh – and be sustained. Just for today. Thanks for all you do.”

Nonprofit Association of the Midlands

“We at Nonprofit Association of the Midlands believe in our democratic system and the upholding of free and fair elections. Democracy is at the core of who we are as nonprofits. We condemn the ongoing violence unfolding at the US Capitol, and we trust that our civil society will prevail.”
Center for Non-Profits (New Jersey) – Attack on Democracy

“In the wake of yesterday’s horrific events in our nation’s capital, we condemn the violent attacks on our democracy by those attempting to overturn a duly held election and to disrupt the peaceful transition of power.

We are also compelled to echo others’ observations regarding the deep-seated racial dynamics underlying these events. The violence and seditious behavior that took place was unacceptable. Yesterday’s events were the culmination of years of enforced inequality, suppression, and differing sets of expectations of behavior for different racial, ethnic, and religious groups. Hard work lies ahead to preserve and strengthen our democracy, to ensure accountability, to confront and dismantle the racial disparities and white supremacy that have culminated in this tragedy.

As we move ahead from this dark day, our thoughts are with our neighbors in Washington, D.C. and the representatives, staffers and all workers in the capitol, and with the media who are bearing witness every day. Together we can and must move closer to restoring civil society, upholding the principles of democracy and fulfilling the greatest aspirations of our country.”

North Carolina Center for Nonprofits

“Like many other nonprofits, the Center was shocked and dismayed by the mob violence at the U.S. Capitol this week. While North Carolina nonprofits weren’t directly involved in Wednesday’s insurrection, it is our responsibility to help heal the divisions that led to this horrific event. As leaders in our communities, nonprofits can and should use our voices to help restore our democracy by providing clear and accurate information about current events, diffusing baseless conspiracy theories, working to dismantle systemic racism, and using our nonpartisan voices to promote civil discourse and civic participation.”

Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits – A Statement About Today’s Events at the Nation’s Capitol

“The Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits represents our state’s very critical and important charitable sector. As a public charity that does not endorse candidates or parties for public office, we do believe in American values of people engaging in democracy with their vote and their voice. Today, we condemn the actions that occurred at our Nation’s Capitol. Violence and intimidation must never be part of our American voice. We hope for calm and a more peaceful political discourse moving forward. And we pray that we will continue to do good for our communities, our state and our country.”

Nonprofit Association of Oregon – Open Letter from CEO

“Yesterday was a sad day for our country as violence unfolded at the U.S. Capitol and we witnessed an attack on America’s democracy.

NAO, along with our nonprofit colleagues from around the country, strongly condemns this violence. We are united in opposition to the forces that seek to disrupt the peaceful and lawful transition of our government.

Below is the statement NAO released yesterday:
“NAO condemns the ongoing violence unfolding at the U.S. Capitol. We stand for the peaceful transition of our government based on the election results of our democracy. We have every confidence that democracy and justice in our civil society will prevail.”

NAO firmly believes in peaceful protests and gatherings to make our voices heard. In a democracy, disagreement is natural and debate is healthy. However, violence is unacceptable and jeopardizes public safety, puts people’s lives at risk, and is in opposition to our nation’s shared value of accepting and honoring the democratic tradition of electing our leaders and following a peaceful transition of political power.

I am confident that our democracy will endure and calm will be restored. A big part of that calm and restoration will be through the hard work and actions of we, as individuals, as a sector, and as a country take moving forward.

Let’s stand together, along with our colleagues in the private and public sectors, to ensure that democracy and justice in our civil society prevails.

Stay safe and be well,”

Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations – We, the People Equals “All People”

“PANO believes communities benefit when We, The People – all people – participate in an equitable, inclusive democratic process that includes free and fair elections like those held in November 2020. Democracy is core to achieving a Pennsylvania where all individuals reach their fullest potential.

We condemn the insurrection that unfolded at the U.S. Capitol yesterday. We commit to pursuing and maintaining civility centered on our values of accountability, bridge building, justice, respect, and risk taking.*

Yesterday was a dark day—for the United States and democratic societies everywhere. In addition to threatening our democracy, the attack gave more visibility to deep-seated racism. We witnessed the brazen breaking and entering, vandalism, and assumption of the Senate President’s chair. We witnessed the disparities in police response to this mob vs. the Black Lives Matter protests—including, but not limited to, the disproportionate number of resulting arrests in the immediate aftermath. We witnessed how long it took media representatives to shift language from “protesters” to “mob.” Centuries of white privilege and enforced inequality fed directly into yesterday’s events.

We must ask ourselves, “How did we contribute? What will it take for each of us to act now to achieve the equitable and just democracy needed for our country to thrive?”

A “simple” transfer of power will not magically solve the challenges ahead. Many saw this coming—as shocking as it was to watch. We have a history that we must own and contend with so that it does not own us. We, the People must ensure accountability for those who encouraged, engaged in, and allowed this overt behavior. We, the People must name the inequities that plague us and dismantle the supremacist culture that culminated in this catastrophe.

We, the People are the grace, compassion, and future of our democracy. With hope for our future,”
Together SC – This is not who we are

“We at Together SC believe in our democratic system and the upholding of free and fair elections. We believe that our communities benefit when all people are able to participate in the democratic process.

Democracy is at the core of who we are and what we aim to achieve as nonprofits leaders.

We strongly condemn the violence that unfolded at the US Capitol today. We trust that our civil society will prevail.”

As I watched thousands of pro-Donald Trump protesters storm the Capitol, I was shaken. We are all shaken by what happened. Today's events are a national tragedy.

Thankfully, our SC delegation is safe and a number have condemned what happened as reported by The Post and Courier.

As we grapple with what to do or say, what we know is that we can not remain silent.

To remain silent is to condone this behavior.

None of us has a solution today large enough to meet the magnitude of this moment, but as a community we can find comfort and a path forward in our care for one another.

We know even in the midst of surreal events you are still finding food for the hungry, sheltering the unhoused, delivering meals to seniors, educating kids, advancing our quality of life and otherwise carrying on with the business of advancing community life.

You are grace in the world. You are the muscle of our democracy.

From all of us at Together SC, we're thinking of you. Thanks for all you do.

Utah Nonprofits Association

“UNA is heartbroken about the assault that took place on January 6, 2021 on our Nation's Capital and our Democracy. UNA has a unique seat at the table to support the voting process and the passage of nonprofit-friendly legislation. We encourage the democratic process and applaud Congress for certifying a fair and free election in affirming the election of President Elect Joe Biden and Vice President Elect Kamala Harris. It is our hope that we all create a lens that includes an inclusive society that fights for justice for every single American.”

Washington Nonprofits

“We at Washington Nonprofits believe in our democratic system and the upholding of free and fair elections. We believe that our communities benefit when all people are able to participate in the democratic process. We condemn the ongoing violence unfolding at the US Capitol, and we trust that our civil society will prevail.”
Other Strong Statements

Former President of the United States, George W. Bush

“Laura and I are watching the scenes of mayhem unfolding at the seat of our Nation's government in disbelief and dismay. It is a sickening and heartbreaking sight. This is how election results are disputed in a banana republic -- not our democratic republic.

I am appalled by the reckless behavior of some political leaders since the election and by the lack of respect shown today for our institutions, our traditions, and our law enforcement. The violent assault on the Capitol -- and disruption of a Constitutionally-mandated meeting of Congress -- was undertaken by people whose passions have been inflamed by falsehoods and false hopes.

Insurrection could do grave damage to our Nation and reputation. In the United States of America, it is the fundamental responsibility of every patriotic citizen to support the rule of law. To those who are disappointed in the results of the election: Our country is more important than the politics of the moment. Let the officials elected by the people fulfill their duties and represent our voices in peace and safety.

May God continue to bless the United States of America.”

Former First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama – “It’s up to each of us to do our part.”

Barr Foundation President Jim Canales – We Should Not Be Surprised

“In the aftermath of insurrection in Washington D.C., reflections from Barr’s president on what enabled yesterday’s violence and what it demands of each of us.

On this morning after the seat of our nation’s government was attacked by domestic terrorists, these are among the truths that are self-evident:

- Language matters here: these were not protesters exercising their first amendment rights. This was a treasonous mob attempting a coup.
- Had this been a group of Black and Brown people, the response by law enforcement and the number of deaths and arrests would have been very different.
- White privilege was on display yesterday, plain and simple.
- If we continue to ignore the structural racism that normalizes yesterday’s actions, we do so at our peril, and we undermine what our country stands for.

Language matters here: these were not protesters exercising their first amendment rights. This was a treasonous mob attempting a coup.

On a day that also represented a shift in power in the United States Senate, we can look to a new day ahead. And yes, we must turn the page on this ugly and destructive chapter in our nation’s history, fomented and fueled by a self-absorbed demagogue. As our President-Elect has said, it is indeed a time for rebuilding, restoring and reuniting.

At the same time, we can neither ignore nor forget how we got to what we witnessed yesterday: this violence was incited by our own elected leaders. It was enabled by those whose own thirst for power and cowardice kept them from holding our president accountable. In pretending they could downplay or ignore his actions, they justified and amplified dangerous, undemocratic words and actions. In doing so, they made it evident that white supremacy still reigns in America.
Our work must begin by acknowledging these realities, by determining the role each of us needs to play to contribute to a new and different future, and by holding our leadership—and ourselves—accountable. It is these points that especially deserve our attention as we talk about “turning the page.”

One may wonder why a nonprofit, philanthropic institution such as the Barr Foundation should issue any statement. We do so not out of any sense of self-importance nor to imply any specialized knowledge of how we got here and what the solutions should be. Rather we add our voice to the chorus of those speaking up because we must speak out. January 6, 2021 will forever be a date etched in our memories, and when we look back, it is our hope at Barr that we do so with abject horror at what occurred and a sense of pride that this served as the moment that we spoke out, stood up, and acted to counter everything that was so wrong and so antithetical to our country’s beliefs, and yet so indicative of our country today.

One image from yesterday still stands out for me: the workers in our nation’s Capitol cleaning up so our lawmakers could resume the work of our democracy.

It is not lost that the workers in this image are all people of color, and they are cleaning up the mess left by an almost entirely white mob waving confederate flags, by rioters who would disenfranchise them of their rights, and by fellow citizens who bear animus toward them. Looking at this image, we must recognize that it has ever been thus.

The work to form a more perfect union will never be complete, and we have so much further to go. We will remain allies, champions and advocates in this work, motivated by the spirit that better days lie ahead. They must.”

**Ford Foundation’s President Darren Walker** – **Democracy is a threat to white supremacy—and that is the cause of America’s crisis**

“I have long believed that inequality is the greatest threat to justice—and, the corollary, that white supremacy is the greatest threat to democracy. But what has become clear during recent weeks—and all the more apparent yesterday—is that the converse is also true: Democracy is the greatest threat to white supremacy.

This explains the white backlash that has plagued American politics from its beginnings and throughout these last four years. It also casts a light on what we witnessed yesterday: A failed coup—an insurrection at the United States Capitol.

Like so many others, I watched, aghast, as a mob stormed our revered temple of representative democracy—and on a day when another 3,865 Americans fell victim to the raging coronavirus pandemic.

The world was shaken by a shocking, odious sight: Confederate battle flags inside the National Statuary Hall; gallows with nooses on the National Mall outside. With glee, two rioters reenacted the murder of George Floyd on the steps of the National City Christian Church—one kneeling on the neck of the other, fully aware of the cameras capturing their laughter. Four people lost their lives.

There is no misunderstanding the message, nor the mission.

And make no mistake: If these had been peaceful protestors for racial justice rather than violent combatants for white pride and grievance, law enforcement would have used
extreme force, if not live bullets, to keep the building secure. We know for sure because this is exactly what happened only a few months ago, as federal forces tear-gassed the peaceably assembled outside the White House to clear the area for a photo-op. As the inimitable, incisive Isabel Wilkerson Tweeted in real time, “we have seen caste in action.”

I, too, cannot see yesterday’s insurrection as anything other than the latest chapter in a long, dispiriting, exhausting history. And yet, from this very same history, I also—perhaps, paradoxically—draw hope.

I’m hopeful because, from our founding contradiction, we have emerged a freer, fairer nation. All too slowly, all too unevenly, all too imperfectly—and at far too high a cost—we, the people, have struggled to root out the strand of white supremacy in our country’s DNA.

Our founding aspirations were just that: aspirations. It’s been the work of generations—from Frederick Douglass and Fannie Lou Hamer to Harriet Tubman and Bayard Rustin—to realize these aspirations. And while much remains to be done, and undone, I believe we can emerge—and are emerging—a more unified, more equal, more just, more American America.

Yes, the ideal of democracy is the greatest threat to the ideology of white supremacy; neither can long endure in the presence of the other. That is why today—and every day—we must renew our commitment to protect our democratic values and institutions from all enemies, foreign and domestic, especially those falsely disguised as patriots.

Goodwill Industries CEO Steve Preston – Message

“Yesterday’s assault on the Capitol was a chilling example of how words and actions can conspire to threaten that which we hold dear. We are thankful that the strength of our institutions, laws and norms prevailed and that the actions and proclamations of leaders across the political spectrum reinforced what we stand for. We should take confidence in that.

We should also pause, however, to consider what lies beyond the violence and criminality of these events. We are a country with deep divisions at a time when coming together to face profound challenges has seldom been more critical. We have a common enemy in COVID-19, which continues to threaten the economic and physical well-being of people and communities across the nation and exacerbate the inequities with which our society fiercely struggles. As a result, millions of our neighbors are experiencing deep stress and uncertainty in their lives. High unemployment and transitioning labor needs are causing a surge in the demand for employment services, such as those Goodwill provides. We see similar demands for housing, food, medical attention and other forms of support.

This is a time when the strength of our convictions about who we are and what we stand for as individuals and leaders — working together for the common good — must prevail. Few times in our history have demanded more of us as lawmakers, business leaders, health care workers, nonprofits and neighbors. I believe our opportunity for common ground far exceeds our differences. We can reach that common ground when we commit to serve each other as we find our way forward.”
Habitat for Humanity CEO Jonathon Reckford – **Statement on the storming of the U.S. Capitol**

“In America, we celebrate what John Adams called ‘A government of laws and not of men.’ We celebrate our rights to peaceably assemble and say what’s on our minds. We defend those rights, even when exercised by those we disagree with.

“What we’ve seen in our nation’s capital today is not the exercise of those rights. What we’ve seen instead was violent, mob rule, targeted at the very beating heart of our democracy — the people elected to carry our voices and the sacred halls that house the people’s branch of our government.

“My grandmother, Millicent Fenwick, served our nation in that building for eight years. Walter Cronkite once called her the ‘conscience of Congress’ for always standing for her virtuous principles. She was fiercely committed to justice and improving conditions for others. And she loved our country.

“She would be ashamed by what happened in the Capitol today.

“I am ashamed, and I am sad. But I also need to be hopeful. And I draw on you, my Habitat family, for that hope.

“Habitat for Humanity builds community around the world. We bring people together, crossing lines of race, class, nationality and religion. We share Dr. King’s vision of building a Beloved Community — a place that that doesn’t eliminate our differences, but celebrates them, allows for tension undergirded by love and leads to transformation.

“Tonight, I am praying for our leaders to find the judgment and wisdom they need to reset our course and join that most important work. *Ecclesiastes* tells us that there is a season for everything. Now is our time to heal.”

Rockefeller Brothers Fund CEO Stephen Heinz – **Insurrection at the Capitol**

“The violent attack on the U.S. Capitol yesterday was distinctly un-American and an affront to our system of democratic government. Politicians who supported or enabled, actively or tacitly, this insurrection must be held to account. Elected officials from every party and at every level of government nationwide who serve in our democratic system at the will of the people have the duty not only to denounce yesterday’s actions but to rectify the campaign of disinformation and flat-out lies that brought us to this point.

Joseph R. Biden, Jr., won the 2020 presidential election by vote of the Electoral College, fair and square, and after the Capitol was secured last evening, the Congress concluded its constitutional duty of certifying the Electoral College votes of the fifty states.

As a philanthropic foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund did not endeavor to advance any particular election outcome. We did support organizations across the country working for a free, fair, and safe process that would allow every American to cast their ballot, every ballot to be counted, and the count to be realized in peaceful transition or continuation of power. That endeavor has been tested more this election cycle than perhaps any in history.

Our democracy, while flawed, is intended to uphold freedom and justice for all Americans. But that doesn’t mean that every American is entitled to everything they want, all the time. In fact, the opposite is true: democracy is about accepting compromise that ensures every American the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of
happiness. That means rejecting rhetoric, symbols, and policies that aim to
disenfranchise and intimidate fellow Americans. That means the rule of law and
prosecution thereunder must apply equally to politician and constituent, rich and poor,
police officer and civilian, black and white. That means elections are legitimate when
they adhere to constitutional process and state law, not only when your candidate wins.

People are in pain, yes. Americans harbor deep distrust of institutions; rampant
misinformation and intentional disinformation are eroding our trust in one another.
Economic inequality has skyrocketed, and moneyed special interests drown out citizen
voices in our politics. Nothing justifies the kind of violent attack we witnessed yesterday.

The 2020 election process has painfully illustrated the failures of our democracy, but
they are decades in the making. There is no “golden age of American democracy” to fall
back on, only an opportunity—and an urgent need—to reinvent democracy to meet the
needs of today and tomorrow. Doing so is the charge of all Americans.

Philanthropy has a special obligation to advance this common purpose. Democracy is
the basis for every other public good our foundations support; studies have shown that
the strength of a country’s democracy correlates to public health, clearer air, quality of
education, social services, and so much more. Long after the acute anxiety of the 2020
election season has dissipated, philanthropy must continue its investment in the
reinvention of American democracy.

YMCA of the USA CEO Kevin Washington – Statement on Events at U.S. Capitol

“The Y has a long, proud history of encouraging participation in our nation’s democracy.
The storming of the U.S. Capitol yesterday—a mob action spurred by divisive rhetoric,
disinformation and bad faith—was an affront to this important work and our core values
of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. I condemn it in the strongest terms
possible, and I hope those who incited violence and broke the law are held accountable
and that peace prevails. My thoughts and prayers are with those who lost their lives or
were injured and their loved ones.

I take some comfort that the election certification rioters hoped to disrupt continued and
was completed. I am grateful for the resolve of the elected officials and civil servants
who discharged their duties undeterred and honored our nation’s democratic values in
support of the Constitution. Our democracy held, but yesterday was a stark reminder
that it is fragile, and preserving it requires people of courage, character and good faith.
People of all ages, races, genders, backgrounds and political perspectives. People who
believe in the promise of this nation and are willing to work purposefully to fulfill it.

A thriving democracy takes all of us. We cannot allow the anti-democratic sentiment that
fueled yesterday’s events—so much of it grounded in hate and tribalism—to gain
strength. We must work toward common ground characterized by equity, decency and
truth.

Bringing people together is what the Y does best. We will continue to do our part to help
people from all walks of life find common ground and promote civil society. And we will
continue to invest in young changemakers and look to them for leadership. One of the
great joys of my job is spending time with young people from across the country who
participate in the Y’s Youth and Government program, which teaches them to value
good-spirited debate, servant leadership and the power of public policy to improve lives.
The program’s motto—“Democracy must be learned by each generation” – is particularly
relevant right now. Young people are the primary source of my hope for the future, and
time spent with our Youth and Government participants always confirms the wisdom of my optimism.

Today is a new day. The Y looks forward to partnering with the new Administration and the new Congress in the weeks and months ahead to advance funding and policies that support our work to strengthen communities. Because at its best, our democracy is capable of this and much more."