

June 22, 2020

Mayor Timothy M. Keller

Office of the Mayor

1 Civic Plaza, 11th Floor

Albuquerque, NM 87102

RE: The City of Albuquerque Commission on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs Issues this Statement on the Removal of Juan de Oñate Statues and Related Issues

Dear Mayor Keller,

The City of Albuquerque Commission of American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs submits this statement in response to the recent events regarding the Albuquerque shooting incident on June 15, 2020 during a public peaceful protest of a Juan de Oñate statue. The gravity of these events and actions has made a tremendous impact on the Albuquerque Native American community and surrounding tribal communities in our state. We unanimously support all efforts to remove Juan de Oñate statues and call for the immediate support by all city and state leadership to advocate for an end to all related representations that promote conquest, racism, and any actions of violence against Native American populations, including people of color.

The historical accounts and atrocities inflicted upon Native people in New Mexico can no longer be ignored, denied, or diminished. Evidence-based research tells us that trauma is passed on through the generations. As a result, past trauma and the violence committed on Native men, women and children in New Mexico, has the potential to trigger renewed pain and harm on the living descendants of the Native communities that reside in New Mexico. Representations like that of Juan de Oñate statues, are constant reminders of genocide and continue to perpetuate violence.

New Mexico is in a critical period and needs to take this opportunity to reflect, acknowledge, and develop remedy and healing. The diaspora of Indigenous peoples is similar to that of African American slavery, the Jewish Holocaust, and other acts of genocide against humanity and need similar validation by city and state leadership.

We challenge the city and state leadership to defend all citizens, to prevent and protect them from further violence. Every person deserves their right to free speech, however, we do not condone further

violence and harm to those whose work is bringing about awareness to an issue. Therefore, this is not a time for complacency or in-action by our city and state leaders.

The Commission on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs offer the following recommendations to Mayor Tim Keller of the City of Albuquerque:

- Active inclusion of the Commission on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs as an advising voice on ALL matters directly impacting the Native American community in the City of Albuquerque.
- Establish a Human Rights reviewing body to determine the outcome of any representations of violence against Native American peoples in the state of New Mexico.
- Work proactively and utilize the expertise and networks of the Commission of American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs to help build resource capacity with appropriate and relative experts, advisors, and community members on culturally-relevant solutions to seek solutions on issues related to racism, violence against people of color, harm against humanity, and equity.
- Encourage transparency and collaboration with other city advising bodies and departments on actions taken that impact the Native American communities in Albuquerque.
- Work to streamline efforts for more frequent and open communication with the Commission of American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs to share recommendations to the Mayor and his leadership staff.
- Continue to support and uphold the critical roles of the City of Albuquerque Tribal Liaisons and City of Albuquerque Native American Affairs Coordinator.
- Develop a plan and timeline for all city employees to complete training in Native American cultural-competency, positive city relations with Native communities, and the promotion of effective communication and collaboration between the city and Native peoples.
- Request for data from the city that relates to the Native American population and establish a plan for reporting of these data to the Commission of American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs.
- Rename all representations of violence against Native Americans and other groups of people.
- Take down all statues and monuments that represent violence against Native Americans and other groups of people.
- Hold the Albuquerque City Council accountable for addressing the needs of Native American citizens.

In addition, the Commission on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs offer the following recommendations to the Albuquerque City Council:

- Establish an ordinance that will ban firearms from public gatherings within the city.
- Institutionalize the Office of Native American Affairs and ensure adequate funding for the office.
- Hold the Mayor's Office accountable for addressing the needs of Native American citizens.

In sum, the City of Albuquerque and State of New Mexico has struggled to find its way out of violence, let us not ignore this recent incident to find better solutions and seek solutions to heal as a community and state.

The City of Albuquerque Commission on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs (CABQ-CAIANA) serves as an advising group for advocating the rights and issues of American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs within the City of Albuquerque and surrounding areas, and encourage all citizens to contact their city and state leadership to voice their concerns.

For more information about the City of Albuquerque Commission on American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs contact Dawn Begay, Native American Affairs Coordinator at (505) 768-4547, dgbegay@cabq.gov, or Terry A. Sloan, Intergovernmental Tribal Liaison at (505) 768-3041, terryslloan@cabq.gov.

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