



**MIKE SCHMIDT**, District Attorney for Multnomah County  
1021 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave., 600 County Courthouse • Portland, Oregon 97204 • 503 988-3162

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**DA Mike Schmidt's prepared remarks – August 30, 2020**

PORTLAND, Ore. – Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt joined Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and Portland Police Bureau Chief Chuck Lovell at a press conference to address the homicide that occurred in downtown on August 29, 2020. A copy of DA Schmidt's prepared remarks are below:

"Thank you Mayor Wheeler and Chief Lovell.

Martin Luther King said: 'We must learn to live together as Brothers or perish together as fools...'

Those words are as true today as they were when Dr. King spoke them 56 years ago in St. Louis.

I know today a lot of my neighbors in Multnomah County are fearful and hurting.

I understand that.

We are stunned and saddened.

We are angry and frustrated that this has happened in our community.

That the right— the duty even— to peacefully protest and speak out for an end to systemic racism that has plagued our country for generations has been undermined by this terrible act of violence.

But my message today to my neighbors is this: We can never allow hatred, racism, division and violence to win.

When we allow that, democracy loses.

When we allow violence and division to triumph, hope dies.

The violence that is occurring in our city needs to stop.

Far too many people have been injured and now someone has died.

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Our community is being terrorized by people coming into Portland for the explicit purpose of committing violence.

That is not acceptable.

We are seeing too much tragedy across our city.

A teenager died the other night in a shooting in northeast Portland.

One woman described the blood that was everywhere in a media report.

She did what neighbors do – she used a belt as a tourniquet to try to stop it.

Hate, division, hopelessness and too many guns in the wrong hands is fueling this round of violence. It will take all of us together to stop the bleeding in our community – and in our country.

My office is working closely with the Portland Police Bureau and Mayor Wheeler to investigate last night's shooting.

As you have heard mentioned earlier in this press conference, we need the cooperation of the public. It is vital that we find answers.

In the midst of the nightly violence, we have also seen a sudden and alarming increase in gun violence.

We know there are individuals who are intent on causing violence and property damage.

I am thankful to the officers and detectives working with Chief Lovell to investigate these crimes.

I know and expect that cases of violence will be investigated and then submitted to my office for review.

My office does not prosecute individuals based on their ideologies or affiliations with political or nonpolitical organizations.

We will initiate a criminal case following a review of all available evidence and whenever legally and ethically appropriate, pursuant to state and constitutional law.

We support freedom of speech. We support non-violent protests. We support speaking out to improve our communities.

We support standing up for each other.

What we do not support is violence.

We are in a pivotal time right now. We cannot afford to allow the calls for social justice and an end to systemic racism to be overshadowed by violence.

We cannot allow this critical moment in our history to be hijacked.

This is our community. We are strong.

We reject violence and when it occurs, my office is ready to hold offenders accountable.

Together, in Dr. King's words: 'Let's choose to live together as Brothers and Sisters-- not perish together as fools.'

Thank you."

#MCDA#

Media Contact:

Brent Weisberg, Communications Director  
Multnomah County District Attorney's Office  
Email: [Brent.Weisberg@mcd.a.us](mailto:Brent.Weisberg@mcd.a.us)