

STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS ON
THE VERDICTS IN THE CRIMINAL TRIAL OF POLICE OFFICER DEREK CHAUVIN

Despite all the claims to the contrary, the criminal justice system in the United States works, even when the person accused of a crime is a police officer. The trial and unanimous conviction on all counts of former police officer Derek Chauvin in Minnesota conclusively demonstrates that officers can be, and in fact are, held to the same standards of justice as all other citizens in our nation, as they should be. The facts of the case surrounding the murder of George Floyd present a horrific tragedy on so many different levels. At the most basic, a man lost his life needlessly at the hands of an officer. At the same time, the assertions by so many who wish to demonize all police officers because of the actions of one officer have been shown to be hollow.

Due process rights *do not* prevent the investigation, charging, trial, and conviction of a police officer. Neither does qualified immunity. Neither do police unions, associations, or legal defense plans.

Police departments, unions, associations, prosecutors, and defense attorneys *all* have their proper role to play, and *all* citizens, including officers who accused of a crime, are entitled to their day in court and to have an impartial judge and jury weigh the evidence against them. They are entitled to have their side of the issue heard and considered. And all of us must respect the decisions of the court system when these fundamental rules of due process are applied.

We, the men and women of this Association, serve the American criminal justice system, sometimes at the cost of our very lives. We respect the verdict of the justice system in this case, and we continue to stand for the proposition that respecting the fundamental Constitutional rights of *all* persons accused of committing an offense, even when that person is a police officer, is no obstacle to the attaining of justice. In fact, it is the very foundation upon which justice can be obtained.

The National Association of Police Organizations, founded in 1978, represents more than 241,000 sworn, rank-and-file law enforcement officers across the United States.