



# KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Sheriff  
Gary Simpson

May 29, 2020

To the Citizens of Kitsap County:

**"It's okay to support law enforcement and also condemn officers who tarnish the badge and abuse their powers." @cops\_life**

A few short weeks ago during National POLICE WEEK we honored police officers who have died in the line of duty. Many citizens expressed heartfelt appreciation of the work we do. I was humbled by their sincerity and gratitude. Today, I am saddened and shocked by what happened, and is happening, in Minneapolis. A citizen is dead, citizens are rioting, and the divide between humanity grows wider.

George Floyd – a name, a 46-year old man, a person, a black man we will sadly remember for all the wrong reasons.

What happens in Minneapolis impacts our community too. Like many, I have followed the news of this tragic and unexplainable death. I am sickened by what I have seen. The tactics used and the outcome of this arrest is indefensible. Kneeling on a person's neck for several minutes while other officers do nothing is unforgiveable.

Today, being a police officer in America is hard. So is living in America as a person of color. We can do better, and we must do better if we want to overcome the divide between people. We must engage in difficult discussions and acknowledge that racism continues to exist in America. Kindness, understanding, listening, and building trust is much better than riots and destroying communities.

I have hope for Kitsap County and trust we can bridge the divide together.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Simpson".

Gary Simpson, Sheriff  
Port Orchard, Wash.