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The past several days have struck at my heart in so many ways.

As a black man, I have firsthand experience with the inequities of our system. Like too many other black people, I have lost friends and loved ones to violent crime and have seen the ways in which the system fails many of us.

As the leader of a labor organization with a majority African-American membership, recent events have caused me to consider the ways in which I can play a role in improving the system on behalf of my members and their families.

And, most importantly, as the father of black sons, I harbor an intense resentment for a system that makes me fear for my sons every time they walk out the door.

My voice on this issue is influenced by all of these perspectives. And it's very simple - this has to stop. Black people have to know that our lives and safety are valued. Right now, that's not the case. This isn't just a political issue, though if the response from the current administration doesn't motivate you to vote...I don't know what will. But this is an issue that will require a coordinated and immediate response from our business leaders, communities of faith, non-profit sector, educational institutions and yes, our political leaders.

Finally, I'm calling for a convening of leaders across every City - a summit - with representatives of government, business, grassroots and neighborhood organizations, labor unions and communities of faith. Together, with the community at large, we must have the difficult conversations about racial, social and economic justice. What we're seeing across this nation are clear and direct warning signs. We ignore them at our own peril.

Sincerely,

Ryan N. Boyer

Ryan N. Boyer
President

