



May 16, 2022

Workers United mourns with our African American communities; decries all acts of hatred and violence

PHILADELPHIA -- It is with a heavy heart that Workers United pens yet another statement of condemnation for a racial hate crime, this time in Buffalo, NY.

We grieve the loss of ten innocent lives, and the wounding of three more, in this senseless act of violence.

Let's call the Buffalo shooting what it is – a mass murder. A deliberate attempt by a white supremacist intended to inflict as much pain and sorrow as possible on an innocent African American community.

Hate crimes in the United States continue to rise, perpetuated by ignorance and intolerance, hidden behind many guises. The fomenting of this radicalization is happening online, in and out of the shadows. They are the acts of cowards, afraid to confront their own shortcomings and determined to lay blame on the innocent.

According to the most recently released Hate Crimes statistics from the Justice Department, there were 8,052 hate crimes that targeted 11,126 victims in 2020. Approximately 6,900 of those victims were racially targeted.

The mass casualties in such cases go hand-in-hand with mass shootings, which are also on the rise. Just over this past weekend, in addition to the Buffalo mass shooting hate crime, there were five other mass shootings across the country, resulting in 14 dead and 39 wounded. One took place in Milwaukee, where 17 people were wounded. Since the start of the year, there have been 202 recorded mass shootings, according to Gun Violence Archive.

These victims are the fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters of our community. Some are our members.

Beyond words of heartfelt condolences, and acts of love and compassion, what else can we do?

We should turn our words into actions. We can, as individuals, as a community, and as a union, work to:

- enforce congressional accountability by voting out politicians who spew hate and disseminate falsehoods
- support legislation to for more effective gun laws
- promote education, so we can learn from our history
- embrace tolerance and understanding through actions, thoughts and words
- destigmatize mental illness; promote mental health education and supports

As with our past condemnation statement, we end with this:



Workers United®

AN SEIU AFFILIATE

TEL (646) 646-6402

FAX (215) 575-9065

22 SOUTH 22ND STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

WORKERSUNITED.ORG

As one of the most socially progressive unions in this country, Workers United has always fought for the rights of our members, regardless of race and creed. Our diversity has always been our strength.

We embrace diversity. We encourage dialogue. We seek tolerance. We promote compassion. These have always been our values.

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LYNNE FOX, PRESIDENT EDGAR ROMNEY, SECRETARY-TREASURER

VASANTHE GUNARATNA EXEC. VICE PRESIDENT JEAN HERVEY, EXEC. VICE PRESIDENT DAVID MELMAN, EXEC. VICE PRESIDENT