



Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

P. O. BOX 1357, NORMAL, ALABAMA 35762

June 3, 2020

Dear Alabama A&M University Family,

For centuries, this nation has been plagued by unjust and unfair laws and policies that have adversely impacted communities of color. The inhumane and senseless murder of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery are yet, continued occurrences of a criminal justice system that has disproportionately impacted our communities nationwide. In the days since the unnecessary murder of Mr. Floyd, protestors have enacted their First Amendment rights and taken to streets and other public places around the world, including here in Huntsville, Alabama. Although the global protests are intended to be peaceful, some have resulted in rioting. Although I do not condone rioting and vandalizing of property, I do share the continued frustration and long-suffering of communities of color who feel that their voices are not being heard.

So, where does this leave us as a nation?

America now sits at a crossroads. The first half of 2020 has been challenging, to say the least. The world economy and global health systems have been destabilized due to the outbreak and continued spread of COVID-19. Every industry, including higher educational institutions like Alabama A&M University, have been drastically impacted. With no clear end in sight, all that we have to hold onto is hope and our faith.

However, I petition that there is a clear and visible action that can be taken. That action is exercising your right to VOTE. It is critical, that come November, each of us exercise our Constitutional duty and right to cast our ballots. Moreover, to affect the change that we want to see, we must vote at every opportunity. Whether a mayoral or presidential race, local school board or senate, attorney general or district attorney, voting is how we effectively make our voices heard.

If you have not registered to vote, the time is NOW. If you have not completed the census, the time is NOW. As torchbearers of our founder, William Hooper Councill, we must create a better tomorrow for generations to come. In the words of our profound University hymn, "Long may you live to bless the world, FOR RIGHT AND JUSTICE TAKE A STAND." In November, wherever you are, the spirit of Councill is counting on you...I am counting on you...people of goodwill throughout this nation are counting on you to VOTE.

Respectfully,

Andrew Hugine, Jr., Ph.D.

President