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National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Statement of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging on its Commitment to Equality and Diversity

This afternoon, the n4a Board of Directors met and issued the following statement on diversity and inclusion:

Throughout its 45-year history, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) has been committed to valuing and supporting people—all people—as they age. That commitment has been evident in our network's response to the COVID-19 pandemic as Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American aging programs have worked tirelessly to ensure that older adults have the supports and services they need to remain safely in their homes.

As our members support the needs of older adults during the COVID-19 crisis, they are keenly aware of another, ongoing and long-standing danger: racism and oppression in our country, which harm the African American, Latinx, Asian American, indigenous and other non-white older adults they serve. The damage wrought by racism includes social inequities, health care disparities and other tremendous harms.

The senseless murder of George Floyd was just one more example of the glaring fact that racism still exists in our country. There are no words to adequately describe the anger and anguish we collectively feel as a result of this injustice. However, silence and inaction are simply not an acceptable response.

n4a will continue to work within our networks, and our members will continue to work within their communities, to embrace diversity and to stand against the legacy of systemic bias, racism and unequal treatment of any person, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, nationality, sexual orientation or gender identity. n4a believes that everyone is created equal and is committed to ensuring and that all Americans receive the opportunity to pursue what the Declaration of Independence promises, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

This is a time to renew our support for social equity and equal justice, and to listen carefully to the diverse older adults and caregivers our network serves so that we can be the best possible partners and allies in communities across the country.