

**Statement from Tom Van Coverden, President & CEO and Lathran J. Woodard, Board Chair of
the National Association of Community Health Centers on the Death of George Floyd**

A Call For Change For All Americans

Community Health Centers stand with all Americans condemning the horrific killing of George Floyd in Minnesota. We are distressed, angry and afraid – especially for the men and women of color in the nation who face harm and discrimination simply by going about their daily lives. Because a 17 year-old girl bravely recorded this brutal murder at the hands of the police – no one – not even the most callous or indifferent – can now ignore what has been neglected and shunned aside in America for far too long. Mr. Floyd’s death, and the scores of those who have suffered similar fates, sadly are a part of a historical legacy of injustice and racism that pervades and is ingrained in our society.

Born out of the civil rights and social justice movement of the 1960s, the nation’s Community Health Centers serve to this day as advocates for quality care and health equity for all. As community-based health care providers to 30 million people in over 14,000 medically underserved communities across America, we are first-hand witnesses to the direct effect of violence, stress, physical and mental abuse on the health and well-being of our patients – people on the receiving end of racism and discrimination because of the color of their skin, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, income level or insurance status.

We as a nation must do more if we are to believe and hold true to the principles of our democracy. And we must do it together. We must usher in *real* change to protect and improve the lives of all people – from our local policing practices to our judicial and legal systems, to our educational institutions, to our health care systems. Most importantly, we must move forward public policies at local, state and national levels that reflect the true needs and priorities of a country in crisis.

Community Health Centers were created for and by the communities they serve. We are ready to work for real change. We are the catalyst for real change in this country; if not us, then who?