

# Immediate Release

June 1, 2020

The protests we are witnessing over the last several days following the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis have caused significant destruction and disruption throughout many major cities in the United States.

We understand the anguish, sadness, and anger so many across our country are feeling; and we acknowledge the urgent need to address injustice wherever it resides in America, including right here in our own communities.—

As Governor Cuomo himself said, although we do not condone violence, theft and property destruction, we understand the anger and grief being expressed as a result of this senseless killing. It could not happen at a worse time as people have been cooped up in their homes as we shelter in place to stem the transmission of a vicious and deadly virus.

Our churches, synagogues, mosques and other houses of faith need to be available for neighbors, leaders and community to come together. And, the personal interaction that occurs in faith communities can prove invaluable. We respectfully request the reopening of faith based organizations allowing at least 25% occupancy with adherence to guidelines for social distancing, use of face coverings and with proper cleaning and hygiene at their facilities.

Embrace these men and women of faith to help address the pent up anger, anguish and tensions. Our faith leaders can and must be a key part of healing our communities. This can be a powerful sign and send a strong message to the people of America that we are still one nation, indivisible- and that we seek liberty and justice for all.

Open the doors to our houses of faith - if only with limited capacity - to help us heal.

Stay safe. Be well.

We are all in this together.

Marc Molinaro, Dutchess  
Steve Neuhaus, Orange  
Pat Ryan, Ulster  
Ed Day, Rockland  
Mary Ellen Odell, Putnam

Rob Rolison, Poughkeepsie  
Steve Noble, Kingston  
Lee Kyriacou, Beacon  
Torrance Harvey, Newburgh  
Kelly Decker, Port Jervis