



# Fraternal Order of Police

## Lodge #36

P.O. Box 299

South Bend, Indiana

46624-0299

*Harvey Mills*  
President

### \*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*

June 24, 2019

*Josh Morgan*  
Vice President

In the United States of America, we follow the sacred legal principle of the Presumption of Innocence. The Executive Board of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #36 stands firm in the representation of its 350+ members in our support for Sgt. O'Neill. Until a thorough and complete investigation is done, we shall not waver. The investigation is being performed by an independent entity, Metro Homicide Unit, with no involvement from the South Bend Police officers who serve with them. This membership asks that we all keep everyone involved in our thoughts and prayers through this tragedy.

*Aaron Knepper*  
Treasurer

*Russell Lupica*  
Secretary

For Mayor and Presidential Candidate Pete Buttigieg to make disparaging remarks such as "All Police work and all of American life takes place in the shadow of racism" is divisive. Mayor Buttigieg's focus on this incident is solely for his political gain and not the health of the city he serves. Mayor Buttigieg's comments have already and will continue to have a detrimental effect on local law enforcement officers and law enforcement officers nationwide. Mayor Buttigieg's comments and actions are driving a wedge between law enforcement officers and the community they took an oath to serve.

*James Burns*  
Chaplain

*James Caruffman*  
Conductor

Mayor Buttigieg has in no way unified the community. Mayor Buttigieg continues to only focus on one incident and one family. Buttigieg has yet to comment on the largest mass shooting in the recent history of South Bend or on one juvenile killing another earlier in the week. Buttigieg's focus on one family has left several others ostracized. He has not spoken to the families involved with the Kelly's Pub Shooting, the South Bend Police Family or the family of Sgt. O'Neill all of whom are suffering greatly.

*Carter Thompson*  
Guard

*Travis Teague 1st*  
*Kyle Bibinski 2nd*  
*Jeremy Siade 3rd*  
Trustees

The accountability level of officers has increased exponentially in the last several years. The department's duty manual has undergone restructuring and is at or above national standards in all areas. Discipline for those officers who violate policy has been swift and firm. The number of suspension days, officers terminated, and those who have chosen to resign has increased due to these changes. With the revamped promotional process, the discipline not only affects the officers in their paycheck but their ability to promote or take any other position on the department; all due to the high accountability level.

*Dan Demler*  
Past President

The members of this lodge and the officers of the South Bend Police Department have been and continue to be committed to building trust between its officers and the community. South Bend Police Department offers a food pantry for community members in need. Cops Coffee Conversation, Popsicle Patrol, Police Athletic League, Multiple Summer Cookouts, SBPD Trick or Treat, Santa's Elfers, the annual Corn Roast, Scholarship Motorcycle ride, and Disc Golf are examples of the commitment we have to the community and building relationships. This list, while long, is a small example of the commitment our officers have, and it does not include the individual efforts like changing tires, adjusting child seats and playing basketball with the community.

In conclusion, the members of FOP #36 plea with the community in the wake of this difficult time that we come together. In a short time, Mayor Buttigieg will no longer be the leader of this great city. However, the South Bend Police Department and the residents of South Bend will still be here. If we are to grow and change for the better, it will require us to set political agendas aside and simply come together.

Fraternally,

*The Executive Board of FOP36*