



**PROCLAMATION
BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BESSEMER, ALABAMA
STATE OF EMERGENCY DUE TO CIVIL UNREST
JUNE 1, 2020**

WHEREAS, on May 25, 2020, the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, caused by a heinous act of a Minneapolis police officer, shocked the nation; and,

WHEREAS, the senseless death of yet another African-American in the course of an encounter with the police has enraged thousands and resulted in violence and destruction in many cities across the country; and,

WHEREAS, I, Kenneth E. Gulley, the Council of the City of Bessemer, the Bessemer Police Department, and the City share in the grief and outrage at the death of Mr. Floyd and call for the investigation and prosecution of those responsible; and,

WHEREAS, we also call for our nation to come together to bring peace and safety to all citizens, regardless of race, creed, national origin and all factors of our diverse citizenry; and,

WHEREAS, Bessemer, has a history of non-violent protest, following the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and,

WHEREAS, on May 31, 2020, following peaceful events in downtown Birmingham, protesting the murder of Mr. Floyd, a gathering in Linn Park turned into an attack on the City's business district, resulting in damage to and destruction of businesses, large and small; and,

WHEREAS, as a result of activity occurring on the night of May 31st, the Birmingham Police Department has responded to reports of burglaries and arson, including more than 13 businesses reporting damage and 14 businesses burglaries; the Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service responded to 22 fires, including 5 commercial businesses, residences, dumpsters, and vehicles; 24 people have been arrested; and,

WHEREAS, this morning there have been calls for violence in Bessemer, Alabama tonight, June 1, 2020, on social media; and

WHEREAS, there is continuing uncertainty about the length of time in which this civil unrest will continue, based on public displays of disorder that are ongoing around the nation; and,

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic remains a threat in the City; and,

WHEREAS, the City stands in full support of citizens who exercise their First Amendment rights to peaceful demonstrations and protests but must protect its citizens, both individuals and businesses, from senseless destruction by criminal mob actions; and,

WHEREAS, authority is granted under Section 34-3 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Bessemer to proclaim the existence of a state of emergency during any time of great public crisis caused by disaster, rioting, civil disorder, catastrophe or similar public emergency and to order restrictions to more effectively protect the lives and property of people within the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, KENNETH E. GULLEY, AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BESSEMER, HEREBY PROCLAIM AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

A state of emergency exists in the City of Bessemer due to the civil unrest and destruction occurring on the night of May 31, 2020, in Birmingham, Alabama, and a call for violence in the