


**STATEMENT BY KENTUCKY BLACK FAITH AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS
ENCOURAGING COMMUNITIES TO CONTINUE TO “STAY AT HOME”**

We, the undersigned, have joined together to state our unequivocal and firm support for the “Statement by National Black Faith and Civil Rights Leaders Encouraging Communities to Continue to ‘Stay at Home’ in States Lifting Orders” ( naacpldf.org/press-release/statement-by-national-black-faith-and-civil-rights-leaders-encouraging-communities-to-continue-to-stay-at-home-in-states-lifting-orders/). We further state our support for Governor Andy Beshear and the steps and actions he has taken to keep all citizens of the Commonwealth safe and informed.

Based on the best data available in Kentucky, Black people make up 8.3% of the state’s population yet we have accounted for 14% of those testing positive for COVID-19 and 22% of COVID-19 deaths. In Louisville, Blacks make up 23.5% of the population yet we have accounted for 27% of individuals testing positive for COVID-19 and 20% of the COVID-19 deaths. In Lexington Blacks make up 15% of the population but 30% of the individuals testing positive for COVID-19 and 55% of the COVID-19 deaths. The virus is ravaging our Black communities.

We find it alarming, reckless and counterproductive, that given these numbers and their impact on the Black community that the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Daniel Cameron, would state and take steps that align himself with actions which have been, will be and are detrimental to the Black community.

Further, it is appalling, insensitive, and disrespectful that the Attorney General would make this announcement as to his intentions on the steps of the Capitol flanked and buttressed by an individual who has demonstrated his lack of judgment and regard, in promoting and supporting the use of “blackface” in his church activities and presentations, and only apologized after being publicly discredited.

<https://myfox8.com/news/pastor-apologizes-for-blackface-skit-at-chur>.

<https://www.kentucky.com/news/local/counties/fayette-county/article44475537.html>

<https://newsone.com/2963355/ky-pastor-apologizes-for-blackface-skit-video/>

We deserve better from Daniel Cameron.

We support the efforts of Governor Beshear and express our opposition to the premature efforts and actions by the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky Daniel Cameron. We call on him to refrain from his stated intentions, and instead, act to protect the lives of Black Kentuckians, and all Kentuckians as the Governor is forthrightly and wisely undertaking.

Signatories

Gerald A. Neal, Kentucky State Senator, 33rd Senatorial District; Reginald Thomas, Kentucky State Senator, 13th Senatorial District; Charles Booker, Kentucky State Representative, 43rd House Legislative District; Rev. Bernard Crayton, Moderator, General Association of Baptists in Kentucky; Marcus Ray, President, Kentucky State Conference of NAACP Branches; Raoul Cunningham, President, Louisville Branch NAACP; Rev. Dr. Frank M. Smith, Jr., President, Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition, Louisville; Michael Bateman, Sire Archon, Psi Boulé, Sigma Phi Pi; Rev. Dr. Kevin W. Cosby, Senior Pastor, St. Stephen Baptist Church, Louisville; Bishop Dr. Darryl B. Starnes Sr. - Presiding Prelate Midwest Episcopal Area Kentucky Conference AME Zion Church; Rev O. Lacy Evans - Presiding Elder Louisville District AME Zion Church; Rev. Erich V. Shumake - Presiding Elder Bardstown District AME Zion Church; Rev. Batavi Combs - Presiding Elder Western Kentucky District AME Zion Church; Rev. Troy I. Thomas, Quinn Chapel AME Church; John J. Johnson, Retired Executive Director, Ky. Commission on Human Rights; Raymond M. Burse, Legal Redress Chair, Louisville Branch NAACP; Dr. Elaine Farris, Retired Educator and Shelbyville Area Branch NAACP; Rev. Alvin W. Farris, Retired Pastor and Shelbyville Area Branch NAACP; Diane Porter, Retired Educator; JoJuana Leavell-Green, CPM;

Tonyia R. Edmondson, First Vice President, Louisville Branch NAACP; Rev. William T. Shumake, Community Missionary Baptist Church, Louisville; Rev. Roosevelt Lightsy, Jr., Community Missionary Baptist Church, Louisville; Charlie Johnson, Entrepreneur; Audwin Helton, Alice Houston, Dana Jackson, 15,000 Degrees; D.W. Lyons, Professor Emeritus, Kentucky State University; Benjamin K. Richmond, Pres/CEO, Louisville Urban League/Retired; Abdul Muhammad, President, Lexington/Fayette Branch NAACP; James Adams, Retired Professor, University of Kentucky; Dr. Rev Michael Robinson, Pastor, Total Grace Baptist Church, Lexington; Janice Harris, President, Shelbyville Area Branch NAACP; Rev. Dr Jim Thurman, NABVETS, KY State Command Council, Lexington; Rev. David Sardon, Pastor, Joshua Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Louisville; Rev. CR Miller, Pastor, Moores Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; Rev. Dr. Frank M. Smith, Jr., Pastor, Christ's Church for our Community, Louisville; Pastor Ronald Walker, Shelby Congregational Methodist Church, Shelbyville; John Banks, President, Hopkinsville Branch NAACP; Kenneth Bates, Hopkinsville Branch NAACP; Rev. Norris Beckley, Senior Pastor, Centennial Baptist Church, Shelbyville; Rev. Robert Marshall, Pastor, Wesley Chaplin United Methodist Church Greater Shelby Ministerial Coalition, Shelbyville; Rev. Dr. Kilen K Gray, Senior Pastor, New Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Shelbyville; Rev. Cassandra D. Harris-Gray; Ms. Raechele Gray; Me. Gerron Smalls; Pastor Donald Clay, Kingdom Life Ministries, Lexington; Rev. Dr. Robert A. Strode, Pastor, Historic St Paul AME Church, Lexington; Rev. James Turley, Pastor, New Zion United Methodist Church, Lexington; Rev. Leslie Whitlock, First Corinthian Baptist Church, Frankfort ; Charles Duke, Retired Air Force Reserves, Lexington; Marcia Whigham Dunn, Housing Chair, Shelbyville Area NAACP; Gracie Lewis; Nancy DeMartra; Mario J. Radford, Growth Point Church, Lexington; Rev. Moses Lee Radford, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Nicholasville; Rev. Norris Mills, Pastor, Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; Rev. Vernon Milner, Pastor, Mount Olive Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; Rev. C.E. Timberlake, Pastor, First Street Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; Rev. Johnny Deeds, Pastor, Durrett Avenue Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; Rev. M.O. Fort, Pastor, Virginia Street Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; Nannetta Sanders-Catlett, NAACP State of Kentucky Women in NAACP (WIN) 2nd Vice-President Hopkinsville/Christian County Branch NAACP; Rev. Julius Catlett , Retired Police Officer; Rev. Abron Meadows; Elder William Beasley, Pastor, New Beginning Pentecostal Church, Shelbyville; Rev. MacArthur Pendleton, Bethel A.M.E. Church, Shelbyville; J.W. Cleary, President, Paducah-McCracken Branch NAACP; Rev. Ray Henderson, Pastor, Washington Street Baptist Church, Paducah; Rev. Alfred Anderson, Pastor, Lincoln High Baptist Church, Paducah; Vanda Moore, President, Derby City Coalition of Labor Union Women; Cylister Williams, President, A. Philip Randolph Institute, Louisville Chapter

The denominations and independent churches represented in this statement, which comprise a combined membership of more than 175,000 people and more than 1600 congregations, intend to remain closed and to continue to worship virtually, with the same dedication and love that we brought to the church. The civil rights organizations represented are working tirelessly to protect our communities from injustice and inequality as this country responds to the pandemic. But they are doing so remotely, working from their homes to continue the vital work of civil rights.
