

San Diego Coalition for Non-Violence

Dear Fellow San Diegans,

We are the members of the San Diego Coalition for Non-Violence, a group of citizens, organizations and community leaders who came together before the 2020 election with concern that extreme partisanship and political polarization could result in violence on our streets. With armed protests, the attack on our nation's Capitol and the prospect of violence at state capitols around the country, some of our worst fears are being realized. Although incidents of political violence have been limited in San Diego, we must remain vigilant. We encourage those who are exercising their right to speak, protest, peacefully assemble and petition our government for redress to do so non-violently. We must foster constructive public dialogue in our community to prevent further division and alienation.

A core principle of our collective social contract, as enshrined in our Constitution, is that free expression and political participation may neither be violent nor seek to incite violence against others. Should we disagree, we have an obligation to tolerate the rights of other people to speak, protest and participate in public

protest and discourse even if that speech is found abhorrent, provided that the speakers refrain from engaging in or promoting violence of any kind. Once we cross the threshold from dialogue into violence, the opportunity for real communication and compromise has been abolished, force reigns, the principle of democracy is weakened and constitutional order is threatened.

In the coming weeks, we call upon our fellow San Diegans to voice their opinions and beliefs in a non-violent manner, without advocating violence, or creating an unacceptable risk of inciting violence.

If one feels compelled to demonstrate and protest (in a COVID-responsible way) perceived wrongs and injustice, please consider abiding by these three simple rules:

1. Participate and protest with a real agenda. Express clear goals to change public policy through constitutional processes and mechanisms. Make your protest today lead to a reasoned discussion in our community to produce real, positive change tomorrow.

2. Make it understood that your goal is to express a personal opinion and desire for change WITHOUT inciting or participating in violent acts aimed at any individual, group or institution;
3. Protest to express personal views, without silencing or inciting others. Do not organize protests in immediate physical proximity of individuals and groups expressing counterviews. Groups that vehemently disagree may inflame emotions. When one group is protesting a cause, perhaps organize the counterprotest in another part of town. Physical proximity invites physical altercation.

We are living in profoundly difficult times. We are also living in a moment of opportunity and hope. We have a chance to reaffirm our commitment to our Constitution and our principles of peaceful and inclusive democracy. We ask all San Diegans to make this a moment in history we can look back on as one in which we worked together to make San Diego the Finest City we strive to be.

Respectfully,

Neville Billimoria, senior vice president of membership and chief advocacy officer, Mission Federal Credit Union

Andrew Blum, Ph.D., executive director, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace and Justice, University of San Diego

The Very Rev. Penny Bridges, dean, St. Paul's Cathedral, Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

Anne Calle, leadership coach, the San Diego County Regional Leadership Institute, San Diego County District Attorney's Office.

Ami Carpenter, associate professor, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace and Justice, University of San Diego

Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D., chancellor, San Diego Community College District

Paula Cordeiro, Dammeyer Distinguished Professor of Global Leadership and Education, University of San Diego

Rabbi Laurie Coskey, Ed.D., CEO/executive director, San Diego College of Continuing Education Foundation

Nicole Crosby, chief deputy city attorney, City of San Diego

Dr. Del Dickson, professor political science and international relations, University of San Diego

Steve Dinkin, president, National Conflict Resolution Center

The Rev. Joseph J. Dirbas Rector, All Souls' Episcopal Church, Point Loma

Ken Druck, Ph.D., community leader, author and founder, The Jenna Druck Center

Mara Elliott, city attorney, City of San Diego

John Lee Evans, Ph.D., former president, board of trustees, San Diego Unified School District

Elizabeth Fitzsimons, vice president leadership and engagement, LEAD San Diego

Philip Gamaghelyan, Ph.D., assistant professor, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego

Leslie Gardner, director, San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center

Tammy Gillies, regional director, ADL (Anti-Defamation League) San Diego

William Gore, sheriff, San Diego County Sheriff's Department

James Harris, D.Ed., president, University of San Diego

Imam Taha Hassane, Islamic Center of San Diego

Nancy Hornberger, CEO, SAY San Diego

Charly Jaffe, crisis counselor, author and organizer, The COVID Grief Network

Rosemary Johnston, secretary, San Diego Regional Interfaith Collaborative

Rev. Michael Kinnamon, Ph.D., former general secretary, National Council of Churches

Rita E. Kuckertz, M.A. operations coordinator, Justice in Mexico and OASIS, University of San Diego

Jeff Light, publisher and editor, The San Diego Union-Tribune

Carl Luna, Ph.D., director, University of San Diego/San Diego City, Mesa and Miramar College's Institute for Civil Civic Engagement

P. Wesley Lundburg, Ph.D., president, San Diego Miramar College

Pamela T. Luster, Ed.D, president, San Diego Mesa College

Topher L. McDougal, Ph.D., associate professor of economic development, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego

Rabbi Scott Meltzer, Ohr Shalom Synagogue and lecturer, religious studies, San Diego State University

The Very Rev. Monsignor Dennis Mikulanis, vicar of ecumenical and interfaith affairs, Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego

Craig Milgrim, member, board trustees, San Diego Community College District

David Miller, Ph.D., department of history, University of San Diego

Nadia Moshirian Binderup, director, community inclusion, San Diego County Sheriff's Department

Bridget Mundy, master of arts in peace and justice, class of 2021, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego

David Nisleit, chief of police, San Diego Police Department

Noelle Norton, Ph.D., dean, USD College of Arts and Sciences

Anne Omsted, president, League of Women Voters North County San Diego

Brian Pepin, president, Lincoln Club of San Diego

Kimber Quinney, Ph.D., assistant professor of history, California State University San Marcos

Bernie Rhinerson, member, board of trustees, San Diego Community College District

Juan F. Roche, Ph.D., professor of practice and faculty advisor, Center for Peace and Commerce, University of San Diego

Maria Nieto Senour, Ph.D, president, board of trustees, San Diego Community College District

Ricky Shabazz, Ed.D., president, San Diego City College

Beth Sirull, president and CEO, Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego

Rt. Rev Bishop Susan Brown Snook, Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

Danielle Spilker-Wilson, Joan B. Kroc School MA student, investigator, San Diego County District Attorney's Office

Kathryn Statler, Ph.D., professor of history, University of San Diego

Lori Thiel, president, League of Women Voters, San Diego

Necla Tschirgi, Ph.D., distinguished professor, Human Security and Peacebuilding, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego

Jonathan Wadley, Ph.D., adjunct assistant professor, Political Science and International Relations, University of San Diego

Mike Williams, professor, Political Science and International Relations and director, Changemaker Hub, University of San Diego