

## **Special Statement from the CT Human Rights Partnership:**

On January 6th, 2021, Americans witnessed a horrifying attack on our democracy. The mob that chanted hateful messages, violently breached the Capitol, and caused Congresspeople and staffers to flee for safety, with the aim of trying to overturn a lawful election for the presidency, shocked the consciences of people of good will in the United States and around the world.

The Connecticut Human Rights Partnership condemns in the strongest possible terms the expressions of hate and the acts of violence perpetrated by this crowd. We are dismayed that five people died, and we express our condolences to their families. This naked act of insurrection is anathema to our core values as a nation under the rule of law. Those responsible must be held accountable for their actions.

CHRP further decries the weaponization of mob rule and the ginning up of disinformation, demonization, and conspiracy theories by the current president, as well as by many politicians and media figures who have abetted his mendacity. These people, too, must be held accountable for their culpability in the attack on the Capitol, including in public discourse and at the ballot box.

Hate, bigotry, racism, and demagoguery have reached a new pinnacle in recent years, in large part because practitioners of a fear-mongering politics--which sees political opponents as enemies to be crushed rather than as people with different opinions to be negotiated with--has been authorized from the top of the government. Not enough politicians and public figures have refused to cooperate with this political approach, following their perceived self-interest rather than principle.

This destructive politics and the forces that support it--among them white privilege and misuse of social media--must be undone. This will be hard, ongoing work in politics, education, and culture, but change is possible. The nation has already seen it happen in 2020, with mass demonstrations for racial justice and police reform, and with elections that repudiated the man who stoked Wednesday's insurrection.

As a human rights organization, CHRP is engaged in one piece of that civic and educational work in the state of Connecticut. We have seen the inherent strength of people uniting together for a common purpose. We have seen the transformative role that defenders of justice, dignity, and human rights can play in reshaping communities for the better. Through our work with high school and college students, we have seen that human rights education is shaping the leaders of tomorrow to continue this work.

We know that reasons for hope can seem scant at this moment. Yet we must rely on hope, and a belief in the good work of educators, activists, leaders, and citizens, if we are going to heal in the days ahead.

*-Connecticut Human Rights Partnership Steering Team*