

**STATEMENT OF MRS. ALICE A. HUFFMAN, PhD  
CALIFORNIA HAWAII NAACP STATE CONFERENCE PRESIDENT  
NAACP NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBER**

March 2, 2019

Earlier today, we in Sacramento, California were disappointed to have our worst fears realized. The Sacramento African-American community has been holding its collective breath and keeping our fingers crossed with the unlikely hope that Ann Marie Schubert, our county district attorney would do the right thing and bring charges against the officers who shot and killed Stephon Clark.

Most distressing during District Attorney Schubert's lengthy press conference earlier today, was the unconscionable attempt by she and her office to somehow imply that Stephon Clark sought "death by police officer" and "researched ways to commit suicide" in the days before his death. This unprecedented attempt to assassinate Mr. Clark twice; once physically and once relative to his character, must not be tolerated!

Reasonable people might differ over many of the sad facts pertaining to the death of Stephon Clark. However, what is beyond dispute is the following. First, at worst, Mr. Clark was accused of vandalizing automobiles. Second, he was unarmed. Third, he was trying to enter his grandmother's home at the time of his death and not fleeing from a contrived police chase worthy of pursuing someone suspected of domestic terrorism. Fourth, he was shot several times in the back or side of his body which would lend strong support to the theory that he was not approaching officers at the time of his death, unless he was doing so running backwards!

Unfortunately, the best forum for the consideration of the four factors above, relative to any law enforcement culpability in the death of Mr. Clark, would have come from a presentation of the entire range of evidence pertinent to his death before a jury in a criminal trial! A civil suit, on behalf of Mr. Clark's children and family will proceed. However, that is not close to the best vehicle for answering one of the key questions left unresolved by District Attorney Schubert's decision to exonerate the Sacramento police officers responsible for shooting Mr. Clark without the benefit of a criminal trial. The District Attorney's decision to not bring charges against the officers literally slams the door on justice for the Clark family. District Attorney Schubert's decision is now solely dispositive relative to an impartial evidence based inquiry into the death of Stephon Clark. District Attorney Schubert is neither a judge nor a jury. Her decision serves to cast her in those roles relative to the actions of the police officers in question.

Let's pretend for a minute that District Attorney Schubert had instead made the proper decision to bring charges against the officers. Those officers would have had the right to legal counsel and to have their actions considered by a jury in a legal process following the constitution and the rules of criminal procedure and evidence. In other words, they, and Mr. Clark's family, would have had their full "day in court" where all of the facts pertaining to Mr. Clark's death could be considered. Isn't that the criminal justice process each of us is told over and over we can have confidence in? We are admonished time and again, that justice is both fair and impartial, theoretically favoring no one. I guess District Attorney Schubert doesn't wish to take any chances with the fate of the officers who took the life of Stephon Clark.

I would hope that we can take Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg at his word when he made the statement that the city of Sacramento is in need of substantial police reform. Further, I would hope that he and the entire city are not just now waking up to that realization. After all, for those who live in certain neighborhoods within our city, or are economically disadvantaged or Black, we have been telling city leaders the same for a very long time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Huffman", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alice Huffman,  
President  
California Hawaii NAACP