



# Ottawa County

Board of Commissioners

**Roger A. Bergman**  
Chairperson

**Matthew R. Fenske**  
Vice-Chairperson

Statement of Roger Bergman, Chair  
Ottawa County Board of Commissioners  
Tuesday, June 9, 2020  
Roger A. Bergman Chairperson  
Matthew R. Fenske Vice-Chairperson

We are living during a time of profound hurt, frustration and, for many deep disappointment and despair regarding high-profile violent events against black Americans - the most recent being the heartbreaking images and death of George Floyd. This event, as well as too many others, brings much pain and trauma to our community. We simply cannot let them go unnoticed or fail to acknowledge the fundamental injustice they represent. Ottawa County values black lives and we deeply grieve with the family of Mr. George Floyd. We support the right of citizens to voice their concerns as a result of his death. We recognize, during this time, the importance of continuing to build trust in the community. We will always support our local law enforcement and will demand justice for actions that are found to be against Sheriff's Office policy and/or the law.

We must, as individuals, leaders and organizations continue to strive to do better. For our region to be safe and welcoming, it must be a place where everyone; regardless of similarities or differences, can experience this personally. Ottawa County commits to making positive progress on the issues related to racial and culture divisions. Our safety, prosperity and desire to see a quality of life maximized for all future generations of residents, depends on it. Ottawa County's vision is a place WHERE YOU BELONG. As leaders, we stand for diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as respect and justice for all. The County understands this work is intentional and has been proactively making it a priority. In 2019 Ottawa County created the first ever Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Department to serve Ottawa County. The office will lead in a proactive manner; building capacity and strategies in our systems and leadership to identify and dismantle systemic human barriers such as, but not limited to, racial division and implicit bias, while ensuring equity for all.

Roger Bergman

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