



New York State Commission for Social Justice

Order Sons of Italy in America

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John A. Fratta
CSJ Chairman

Anthony Naccarato
State President

June 10, 2020

Hon. Levar Stoney, Mayor
City of Richmond Virginia
900 E. Broad, Suite 201
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Mayor Stoney:

The New York Commission for Social Justice is the anti-defamation arm of the New York Grand Lodge, Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America. The Commission has, throughout the years, engaged in a wide variety of activities geared toward accomplishing its twin goals of promoting a positive image of Italian Americans and fighting bias, bigotry, and defamation.

Hearing the news of the attack on the Christopher Columbus Statue in your City was very distressing to our Italian American Community. Such lawlessness should not and cannot continue in a civil society. Christopher Columbus is a hero to Italian Americans, as well as Americans, and a source of pride. Following the largest lynching of Italians that took place in America in 1891 in New Orleans, Christopher Columbus has become the symbol for Italian American pride. The discrimination and bigotry of Italian Americans ran rampant in America. Still today, we are dealing with a level of bigotry and negative stereotyping. Acts such as this promote that bigotry.

The vandalism and removal of this statue is a hate crime and the perpetrators should be charged under that statute. Think of how you would feel if a statue that represented pride in your community was torn down by vandals? We are asking that another statue of Columbus be reconstructed at that location and that the perpetrators of this crime be charged.

I know we are all going through exceedingly difficult times right now. First, we had the corona virus and now the senseless murder of George Floyd and the violence that erupted by thugs who infiltrated the peaceful protestors. We need to bring America back together, all Americans. Acts like this only continue to divide us. Please help us right this wrong.

We thank you for your time and look forward to a response.

Sincerely,

Anthony Naccarato
Anthony Naccarato, President
New York Grand Lodge OSDIA

John A. Fratta
John A. Fratta, Chairman
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