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Association of
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Dearest LBAW Community,

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones in safety and in health. I write this letter to send our love and support to those facing innumerable challenges throughout this tumultuous period.

We stand in solidarity with black communities throughout Washington and the United States as they demand justice for the systemic ills that buttress police brutality. We see you and honor you. We ask our membership to self-reflect on their own biases and ensure that white supremacy is checked, no matter the source. *Su lucha es nuestra lucha.*

Importantly, we recognize the Afrolatinx community as part of our own. Colorism has no place here.

We recognize that brown and black communities have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Essential employment, inequitable health care, and systemic racism have compounded the global pandemic for communities of color.

We stand in solidarity with people of color throughout Washington, including the farmworkers in Eastern Washington demanding safety equipment and adequate protections from their employers. Farmworkers are *essential* in every sense of the word; we would all suffer without their work. LBAW honors their labor and pleads for their safety.

We stand in solidarity with those who are confined in the state and federal detention systems throughout Washington. Systems that have historically failed to acknowledge and protect the confined, their rights and their dignity. This crisis highlights the reform of compassion that is much needed and overdue in our prison systems.

For our LGBTQ communities, happy Pride Month. We honor and thank Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, our Latinx and black foremothers.

There are many ways to take action to address systemic racism, including financial support and self-education. We encourage you to donate to the LBAW scholarship fund, the Loren Miller Bar Association scholarship fund, and other minority bar associations, as well as other people-of-colored organizations focused on equity and justice for communities of color. We encourage you to use your unique positions of power, privilege, and education to enact meaningful changes in the judiciary and legislature.

Although COVID-19 poses a new challenge for our organization, LBAW has adapted. LBAW continues to hold our legal clinics remotely, in an effort to address the unmet legal needs of our community members. We continue to conduct judicial evaluations virtually for those interested in ratings by LBAW. Volunteering for these programs is a great way to take action. We are working to find alternatives to our traditional “dessert dash” fundraiser to raise essential resources for our scholarship fund. When news regarding our annual gala is available, we will provide it to our members and supporters.

In love and solidarity,

Vanessa Arno Martinez and the LBAW Board