Ohio Psychological Association: Official Statement

OPA Condemns the Acts of Unlawful Civil Disobedience and Violence

January 8, 2021

Written by: Dr. Erich Merkle – OPA President Dr. Cynthia Van Keuren | Dr. Erich Merkle, OPA Past President | Dr. Cathy McDaniels Wilson – OPA President-Elect | Dr. Karissa Fogarty – OPA Committee for Social Responsibility

The Ohio Psychological Association strongly condemns the acts of unlawful civil disobedience and violence that led to the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday, January 6, 2021. OPA recognizes that a hallmark of American Democracy is the peaceful transition among presidential leadership after our national elections this past fall. Wednesday's civil unrest that led to storming of the US Capitol represents an affront to an essential feature of our country's democratic process. This violence and civil disruption come at a time of great political, emotional, and philosophical division within our nation and it is important now more than ever for us to unite together despite our sociopolitical differences against these violent acts of rage. As psychologists, we cannot imagine what our US members of Congress might have been feeling amidst the siege of the Capitol building where we expect that top security measures would be employed and as they were attempting to certify the Electoral College vote. OPA is saddened that considerable militarized security measures were preemptively employed for Black Lives Matter protests in May while these same protections were not taken for anticipated protests against the presidential election certification. We at OPA would like to extend our heartfelt acknowledgement of the bravery of the members of Congress who helped move our democracy forward by certifying the election even after their lives were threatened. In addition, we extend our deepest sympathies to lives lost and those who were harmed during this time protest across law enforcement and those exercising their Constitutional Freedom of Speech rights.

OPA offers its support to the Washington, DC community members and our nation affected by these events as well as psychologists who serve these individuals. Our Association strives to create a safe space for advocacy by promoting non-violence. We do not endorse the expression of thoughts and feelings through violent or aggressive means. This series of events is a reminder to us of the importance of unity as we continue to navigate through these challenging times.

###

The Ohio Psychological Association, in Columbus, Ohio, is membership organization of approximately 1,500 Ohio psychologists. Its mission is to advance psychology as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting human welfare. For more information or for a psychologist referral, visit www.ohpsych.org.