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MN NONPROFITS

CALL WITH THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR AND LT. GOVERNOR

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>> JON PRATT: Good afternoon, and welcome. Thank you to Lieutenant Governor Flanagan and Commissioner Lucero who are joining us for this call as well as the community leaders and everyone participating. This is the fifth in a series of calls we sponsored with Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan in an extraordinary time of change for this state and the nonprofit sector. March and April of this year we saw 25% of all Minnesota nonprofit employees filed initial unemployment claims. The catastrophic revenue loss is particularly hitting arts, healthcare, education and human services. We have seen a major response of philanthropic contributions to the council and foundations and other special initiatives, CARES Act, payroll protection loans and on May 25, the killing of Floyd George at the hands of Minneapolis police has changed this state if not the world. In the wake of George Floyd's murder we are seeing new and renewed commitments to antiracism in nonprofit communities, this is one way for this sector to educate ourselves from each other, one another to continue to engage policymakers at the highest level. Today is the start of the

Minnesota special legislative session. MCN was one of over 30 groups today to endorse the People of Color and Indigenous Caucus of the state legislature's positions on police accountability reforms. MCN is committed to centering racial equity and building and sustaining relationships that reflect our priorities on equity and justice through a model of shared leadership.

We are also committed to being authentic and transparent. Recognizing that like many nonprofits, MCN is a white-led, white-dominant organization and through that lens there is a lot we don't know and we haven't experienced. There is a lot of unlearning we need to do.

While we look to the leadership of our colleagues, including those on this call and community members who have been doing this work far longer than we and as an organization we are committed to self-examination, educating ourselves, and taking action. We're pleased to be joined and thank you Lieutenant Governor Flanagan for joining us now. Over to you.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Thank you, everyone. I am navigating literally in this moment, chatting with my kiddo about what she's going to do this afternoon. Excuse me if I am just a little distracted in this moment.

But I'm really grateful to be able to join all of you, and I know that, you know, this has been a really important part of our work and just in forming and building a team as we have looked at the response to COVID-19 and being part of these conversations.

You know, we really -- we have shared some tough news and hard questions with this community as it's related to COVID-19, and to the virus. And, you know, with the people that you serve and the folks just collectively in our community.

We still have a tremendous amount of work to do, but together, we're charting a path forward where we learn to live with the virus while also protecting our most vulnerable folks in our communities. And supporting each other in new and socially distanced ways. As hard as the path to spring was, however, nothing has been as challenging as absorbing the reality of the murder of George Floyd.

And I think in this moment, navigating just as a leader, to be very candid, my own grief and anger and heart break and rage, really, during this time. And knowing that many of those feelings and emotions propelled people into the streets, not only in this Minnesota, but across the globe.

I appreciate being in relationship with all of you, and with Marie and Ann and all the members of the nonprofits as we can build on the meaningful conversations in order to tackle what is in front of us in this moment. As we grapple with a murder that was broadcast around the world, the unrest and really the path forward at this incredibly critical time.

The shocking murder of George Floyd two weeks ago under

the knee of a police officer in Minneapolis has forced many people in the state of Minnesota to open their eyes to the painful truth and long history of racial injustices and police violence against nonwhite people in our state.

And I know that for myself, and probably for many of you, it has also been frustrating for folks who have been doing this work for a very long time, that some people in our state are just coming around to the fact that this is an issue. But it also provides an opportunity to do better and to truly acknowledge our history. And to not shed tears when monuments fall.

I'll be happy to talk more about that later. But the State of Minnesota has some of the worst inequities in the country, we know the statistics. We recognize the disparities that we see are really a direct result of long-standing racism, oppression, and violence, frankly, that our state has been founded on.

Our Minnesota history is embedded with the violent actions of non -- against non-white people, including the issues leading to the Dakota uprising, the interment and treatment of the Dakota people at Fort Snelling at B'dote, the public execution of 38 Dakota men, plus two. And next week is the anniversary of the lynching of three black men in Duluth, Max Mason was given a pardon 100 years later, voted on an hour or so ago.

Truly, that is a snapshot of the many more cases of violence that went unseen or unaddressed.

The history cannot be erased from the conversations that we're having around creating a new normal. But we need to rip things wide open. The Governor and I listened to those impacted by the tragedy, and heart break of the last two weeks, and emphasized that we need to get something accomplished to help folks who suffer trauma at the hands of police officers, to business owners who are struggling to recover from the destruction, and our community as a whole, who is left to reconcile with the events that unfolded since Memorial Day.

You heard me say getting back to normal isn't an option either. Normal wasn't working for black folks, indigenous folks, immigrants, People of Color all across the state. We have an opportunity to rebuild, not replace. Rebuild our neighbors businesses, and economy that can be inclusive of folks.

That's why we have called the legislature back to special session. I'm grateful, Jon to hear you endorsed the People of Color and Indigenous Caucus reform around police accountability. We met yesterday and will continue to meet with community to identify and partnership how we can help the hundreds of small businesses along Lake Street, University Avenue and on the north side to reopen businesses and rebuild. And push back against the forces of gentrification to ensure that our communities can truly thrive and be robust. We have to be creative in that. As

we do the assessment to truly hear from people, and not rush through what rebuilding looks like, according to one person or another.

I know that you are all on this call today because you are committed to creating a more equitable future and erasing racism in Minnesota, we're not going to Minnesota nice our way through this. We rely on your leadership and partnership to continue to push for reform and regrowth and really look at, you know, this special session as an important first step, and then look to the summer and to the fall and to the next package year and legislative session. This is scaffolding, and we're building for a future, we will no longer frankly, just being polite as we are working to tackle these issues.

So I'm honored to be having this conversation with you today in partnership with Commissioner Rebecca Lucero who is just one of generally my favorite leaders, I'm excited that I get to work with her every day, who is helping to lead our response to COVID-19 with regards to race. But is also now lead little the incredibly transformative work with the Minneapolis Police Department and file the charge of discrimination. And we're using the tools in our toolbox as the executive branch to push and she has been at the forefront of that, leading the way.

So I'm excited that you will be able to hear from her directly as well. I will turn it over to her now and look forward to a bit of a dialogue when she's done. Thanks, Jon, and everybody for being here.

>> COMM REBECCA LUCERO: Hello, hi, everyone. It is good to be here. Hi, Jon. Good to hear your voice and see everyone's names up on my screen.

So let's see. I would really like to talk about some of the work that we have been doing in the Department of Human rights. So for those of you who may not be familiar with our agency we're Minnesota civil rights enforcement agency. We have one of the strongest civil rights enforcement laws in the country. One of the charges we have from the legislature is to make sure we are doing everything we can to create a world where everyone can live with dignity and joy, free from discrimination.

So let's see. On May 25th was the day that Mr. Floyd -- George Floyd was killed. Immediately that was quickly identified as a civil rights issue. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor asked us all to be thinking creatively and looking at our charges to see where we could step in and have an impact.

So on June 2, I filed a charge of discrimination, I filed a Commissioner's charge related to the death of Mr. Floyd and officially announced that the Minnesota Department of Human rights is opening an investigation into the Minneapolis Police Department. For context in what this means. This is the first time the state launched an investigation into the systemic

practices of the largest Police Department in the state. And only investigation surrounding the killing of Mr. Floyd following the practices implemented by Minneapolis Police Department. We're not talking about individual liability, we're looking at systems. All the systems that lead to these things happening over and over again.

The first time I worked on a police killing case was actually the killing of Dominick Felder in 2006, where he was shot eight times in the back by police. And so this work continues from long before this moment, and that has certainly been something we continue to hear is how this work has been going on for addicts, that community leaders have been asking for structural change. They have fought for it. All of the work and commitment that has come before has led to this moment where we can make some -- where we can make big changes.

So that charge was filed on June 2. One of the things that we were able to do quickly is file a temporary restraining order against the City of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Police Department. We did that Friday last week.

What the temporary restraining order said is we want to make sure we are doing everything we can to prevent harm immediately. And so we filed an agreement and partnership with the City of Minneapolis that said, look, we agree to this temporary restraining order. We want to make sure there are certain provisions in place that prevent harm.

One of the things that got the most press was the ban of choke holds and neck restraints. In Minneapolis, you were able to use choke holds even to render somebody unconscious. That was permitted. For instance, when somebody is resisting arrest or acting with aggression.

So moving forward, choke holds and neck restraints are not allowed. There was also some other provisions in there. Such as duty to report and duty to intervene, which dramatically strengthened which was already in place, which stresses you have to intervene and report regardless of the rank of the officer. And duty to intervene doesn't simply mean saying, hey, maybe we shouldn't do this, hey maybe we should stop. It means verbally and physically intervening. That is because an officer has a duty to serve and protect. So if they need to serve and protect against another police officer by intervening, they need to do that.

There is a couple other provisions I would be happy to talk about if people have questions regarding crowd control, reviewing policy -- reviewing discipline decisions and reviewing camera footage. But another -- if people have those questions. Another provision included in the temporary restraining order that was really important for the course of the upcoming investigation for the Department of Human rights is that the City of Minneapolis agreed to actively cooperate. Not interfere, but actively cooperate with the Department of Human

rights on its investigation.

That is pretty transformative -- if any of you have been involved in lawsuits to have all of the parties aligned on values, leadership aligned on values and willing to work through what is an enforcement mechanism? A legal investigation, charge of discrimination against them. So I really commend their willingness to work boldly in moving forward on it. Now is where the investigation starts. So in the coming weeks and months we'll be an investigation. Of course, community engagement must be at the center of that work. So we're working to do and put together really thoughtful community engagement process, which we'll be able to report on and share with everyone as soon as possible.

And just for a little bit of context, also of what this means in terms of similar situations like this. So it typically takes -- so generally, it is the federal Government that is coming in and doing the consent decrees. It is almost never, ever, ever, the state doing these kind of investigations. These are big investigations.

And so the state is doing it in this situation, because the federal Government is not willing to lead. You heard Governor Walz say time and time again, if Washington won't lead, we will. Minnesota is standing up for civil rights, which is great. The most analogous situation is Chicago where the Department of Justice had already done the full investigation and then a new President came in that was no longer interested in moving forward with the consent decree. So the Attorney General in Illinois moved forward with that consent decree in Chicago.

So this is a pretty historic thing that we're doing here in Minnesota. And it is going to take a lot of support and help. And we really appreciate all of those that reached out to offer that support.

Also, some of the pieces like banning chokeholds, those are part of the consent decree. For instance, in forth son that was part of the consent decree issued, it took them many months, up to two years to issue that consent decree. We did it in a week. Of course, the investigation has to take time, the community engagement piece must be thoughtful, intentional, take time and we acted boldly to make some very quick changes.

And so, you know, as we move forward, I'm happy to report back on where the investigation is and where the process is, but we also continue to do all of our other work and investigations and work with contractors. It is all related. And, yeah, just really grateful to be -- to be here doing this work in this moment in partnership with everyone here. So thank you all for this time.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Well, thank you, Commissioner Lucero and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. We really appreciate that you are both here with us. Lieutenant Governor, you mentioned listening

to community, and that's what we hope to provide a platform for that today.

I'm Marie Ellis, I'm the Public Policy Director at the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. I think we all know it is time and well past time to confront anti-Blackness in our communities, in our nonprofit organizations, and in ourselves.

I'm not the right person to be leading that conversation, but I'm very grateful to be able to participate in it. We so appreciate our colleagues who have agreed to share their experiences, their thoughts, and their questions with Commissioner Lucero, Lieutenant Governor, and everyone on the call today.

I want to acknowledge with the short turnaround time for this call, we weren't able to represent all of the voices that should be centered in this conversation. We wouldn't be able to do that in one hour anyway.

There are nonprofit organizations all over the state that have been working to advance racial equity in Minnesota for a long time. Those who are renewing their commitment to do so. It is our strong intent and hope at MCN that we can support and really further that work.

So my role today is to moderate the flow of our conversation. And first up, that means reminding all of our guests to introduce themselves and their organization. Eunice, you are up first. I will mention while they're unmuting themselves, they're joining us by phone today. So if you can't see Eunice, there is nothing wrong with your computer. If you can, there is something wrong because they are joining by phone. Eunice, the virtual floor is yours.

>> EUNICE ADJEI: Hi, everyone, my name is Eunice Adjei I'm a board member of MCN, so shout out and I'm a member of the Jugaad Leadership and also working with Rebecca because I'm the share for our regional Human Rights Commission here in saint Cloud, thank you for allowing me to share my voice in the experiences with our Police Department here. I will leave it with that. I'm not sure I want to say more. I think we're doing introductions for now, right?

>> MARIE ELLIS: What was that, Eunice?

>> EUNICE ADJEI: We're just doing introductions for now, right?

>> MARIE ELLIS: The floor is yours. Not just introductions.

>> EUNICE ADJEI: Oh, okay. I said a shout out to MCN and I'm grateful that we are having this opportunity to share our voices and our experiences. In light of everything that is going on. This is frustrating, it is challenging, even though we with respect to COVID-19 or so in our midst. I just want to say that I appreciate the fact that our Lieutenant Governor Flanagan and Commissioner Rebecca are on the call. I like when you share that you are now engaging community, because it is

very good to work with community and also in partnership with community.

And also you also recognized that this work takes time. We cannot rush it. So we really have to be careful on what we do. You also recognize that we need more voices at the table.

Here in St. Cloud, I think one thing movingly forward that we all need to do or recognize is working in partnership with also the police department in St. Cloud we have a police community agreement that has really helped us in working with the police. So what we did is we brought a lot of minority organizations to the table to actually have a conversation with the police department as to what we needed from them and also what they needed from us. So it was something -- it was a very good dialogue, it was candid and also very attended.

We didn't do it just a while. It took a lot of time, a lot of years. You know? Now that we do have the agreement, every year, we revisit it, have a meeting to make sure that what we are implementing, we are doing it. If there are any changes that we really want on the agreement, we do that. One thing that the community members really sort of wanted from the police department is that whenever they do stop someone, they wanted them to issue them their business cards, you know, which was something that they started doing.

Another thing that the police department also did is they have a scholar program, which is for youth. They're real teaching the youth not to be scared of the police at a very young age. Which is very good. Even with the Jugaad Leadership program, we have the police department coming, the chief himself presenting to the group on how to build relationships with them. You know, so people look forward to this. We visit the police department, you know, we have it all on the place and issues, like how things work.

If anyone has questions, you know they can always come see me. This is something that can be implemented in other communities. I will leave it here for now for my other colleagues to also have time to talk. Thanks.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Thank you, Eunice, I forgot to mention too, the Commissioner and Lieutenant Governor, you are welcome to hop in between any of our speakers, guests today and share any reactions you have or answer any questions. I will pause for a minute in case you want to do that?

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Marie, I would say thank you, Eunice, thank you so much. As we look at the People of Color and Indigenous Caucus priorities around police reform and accountability, being able to share models that work is really key.

And we also know that one size does not fit all communities. I grew up in a community where many kids ran towards the police, and lived for more than a decade in a community where children were instructed to run from them. So our experiences are very

different depending on where we live and who we are across the state. But I appreciate that. And you know, these are the kind of things that we need to hear about that are working and are community driven and led. So thank you so much for sharing.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Thank you. Brett and Monica, you are both up next.

>> BRETT GRANT: Hi, everybody. My name is Brett Grant I'm with Voices for Racial Justice, thank you Lieutenant Governor and Commissioner Lucero. I will start it off, and my colleague Monica Hurtado will follow. The first question is: In addition to police accountability and reform the Walz-Flanagan administration has said that one of your special session priorities is building a stronger, more equitable economy. Voices for Racial Justice belongs to a number of Coalitions that work with organizers in the Twin Cities and in Greater Minnesota.

One question we're being asked is what are your plans to identify and support the projects in the Twin Cities and in Greater Minnesota that are equity and bonding projects?

For example, we're asked about businesses in buildings run by People of Color recently destroyed in south Minneapolis, north Minneapolis and St. Paul. There are projects in other areas with racial equity at the core led by People of Color. In asking this question, I think about the Governor and Lieutenant Governor local jobs and project plan which commit it is to invest in projects and initiatives throughout the state from community-based organizations that are led by and serve communities of color and American Indians.

So that the next question is from Monica Hurtado.

>> MONICA HURTADO: Actually, go ahead, and do you want to comment?

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Sure, I can jump in it, if that is okay? Hi, Brett.

>> BRETT GRANT: Hey!

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: It is good to see you virtually.

>> BRETT GRANT: You, too.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: I'm grateful we had an opportunity to have a conversation before we couldn't be in the same room together early on in had the session as we talked about equity and bonding. We are still moving our 30 million, specifically for organizations led by and for People of Color. I think one of the things that we are really clear on, the Governor and I are really clear on is that we had the bonding bill that had already been proposed. And we had the events of the last couple of weeks and it shows us we need more investment. I want to reject the frame that we have some folks in the Senate moving that says oh, we'll see where we can add projects here and there. This is the time and this is the moment to do that.

I am a little frightened by Senator Gazelka saying they're going to be done by next week. If we are thoroughly doing an investment that is community led and gets to the true cost of things like deductibles for insurance. For some of the business owners the Governor talked to last week they're like listen if I had \$10,000 to help with that deductible, I'm good, I can get there. Other folks they need more help. We don't know until we have some of the conversations. We're doing -- some of the conversations through DEED, directly with the business owners, but I also ask if it is all right, that we also work in partnership with Voices for Racial Justice to help facilitate some of those conversations so that we can move a package that's -- that is from the community.

Because right now if you want to wrap it up next week with the bonding bill you don't have a press in place that is truly listening to the folks that are impacted. I would be down to do that with you. I think MMB, the Minnesota Managing Budget Office, they're the budget gurus for the state are also looking to how we can fund the communities that are most impacted. There is like G.O. bonds, that fund infrastructure. If you want to really nerd out we can talk about all that stuff. But there is also those dollars that we can see if there is more flexibility where that can be. It is tough unless you pay cash in bonding to businesses that are destroyed.

Let's be clear, we were on a call earlier today with philanthropy and they have a role as well. As a recovering Executive Director, now is the time when we're like listen, spend down your endowment y'all. That is why it is there. Make sure what you are offering with the nonprofits you are working with -- we were serious before for around COVID-19 with gen-op dollars, it has never been more important than the moment we find ourselves in right now and to directly fund businesses who may not be able to access funding in other places. So we're thinking about it.

We want to design a process. But I also want to make sure that we are doing it with folks like yourself who can help us think through what some of the obstacles or, you know, things that we might not be able to see right now as we're determining how to do that. And some of our, like normal tools, like G.O. bonds can't go to private organizations, but we want to try to figure out what that can look like. We're working through how to think about it but need thought partners.

I think I just gave both of us homework after this call.

>> BRETT GRANT: Let's do it. No, thank you.

>> COMM REBECCA LUCERO: Lieutenant Governor and Brett, if I could add you. You asked about bonding. But all of the issues around COVID, all of the things are so intersectional. I wanted to talk about quickly the federal funding that is out there that we are looking at right now that relates specifically to the recovery and resiliency of our communities and we know that

COVID is having pretty devastating impacts on Communities of Color disproportionately. As the COVID funds come in, we're looking at to be able to put some real money into community organizations that are led by and for communities of color. If we are talking about recovery and resiliency that is part of where we need to be spending that money.

So look -- like we're moving that, talking about that every single day. We will look to report back on that shortly as well.

>> BRETT GRANT: Thank you.

>> MONICA HURTADO: [Indiscernible] hello, everybody. Monica Hurtado here with Voices for Racial Justice. I have a couple of questions related to the [muffled] [inaudible] we know it is important that Black communities, indigenous communities and communities of color understand the role of the Governor and the office play to make sure equity is being prioritized and practiced during the creation and implementation of legislation in our communities.

So one tool that Voices for Racial Justice has that keeps our communities at the center of the situation is a tool we call the racial equity impact assessment. And one request we will have today is if possible to continue this conversation with the Lieutenant Governor and the Governor's office to explore opportunities for this tool to be part of the work ahead to address the structure and racism is everywhere within the system. So you already said, you are willing to -- to continue our conversation with us. So can be this also part of the conversation.

>> COMM REBECCA LUCERO: Hey, Monica, good to see you. I'm happy to answer that question. So first and foremost, yes, I would love to meet to talk about that, and look at that. I have seen that before. It is a great tool.

One of the things I really want to make sure that you know is that, I mean, those of you who participate in the council of nonprofits using an equity lens tool has always been essential to the work that I do. We carry that with us into state Government and we're moving that forward right now. In fact, we have developed specifically for the COVID-19 response but it is designed to go past this moment, right? Build into the systems. Antiracist equity tool. It asks a lot of the questions that are oftentimes ask, who is involved? Who is impacted? Who is at the table? How are these things being framed? Just all of those kinds of questions. And that tool is supposed to be used by all of the workgroups that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor set up and those making the decisions, for instance, on the \$1.3 billion from the federal Government, that is the tool people are supposed to be using.

That tool exists. It is being circulated right now and actually we're starting trainings on how to use it next week.

What I will say is we always need to keep improving this

tool and looked at a lot of different models, I'm excited to talk to you to see what you are seeing that is working particularly well with yours. And this is really specifically to the resilience and recovery work group that the Lieutenant Governor and I lead. What can we do to make sure what we do lives past this moment and more equitable outcomes past this moment. Designing this is a perfect example of how to build out on that. I'm looking forward to talking with you about that and everything else that is on our to talk about list soon. So many things.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: I'm nodding in agreement. I'm down with that.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Excellent. Thank you, Brett and Monica. One thought, since you mentioned the community resiliency and recovery work group or Committee there is not a lot online about that. I think if you can put more online about it, people would appreciate it.

>> COMM REBECCA LUCERO: To let you know, it launched Friday of last week. The dashboard now has specific dashboard from the community resiliency and recovery all about the racial impact. I think there are only 14 states across the country that are talking about race as it relates to COVID. It took a while to get the data up, I want to apologize. Make sure you get race data correct is really challenging. If you say it incorrectly it can be a stigma around it or assumptions made about People of Color in the indigenous community that we don't want made. I will find it real quick and post it in the message. But we are looking to get up on it, too.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Excellent. Thank you. I think we would all have correct data that is a little slower than incorrect data that is fast and doesn't help anyone. Let's see, next on the list is Bashir, we look forward to hearing from you.

>> BASHIR MOHAMUD: Thank you, Marie and the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and the Lieutenant Governor and Commissioner Lucero for taking time out of your busy schedules, we appreciate that. My name is Bashir, I am with Center for African Immigrants and Refugees. Cairo. We're based in central Minnesota and Oregon. We're a national organization. We're want to achieve equity through system changing programs and services and through community organizing service leadership and advocacy. We mainly work in the education area and have invested large into the community health problems, especially as we were hit by the COVID-19.

The COVID-19 situation, I think, Lieutenant Governor Flanagan has spoken about data. I don't want to talk about that. If we have one of the worst data around equity, especially in the public, education and schools. The children in communities we serve have historically been lagging behind. The COVID-19 has exacerbated that even further. As we move things to the online learning platforms. That has completely

forgotten about the community struggles. We didn't have the device to connect to the online platform. Not all of our families who were connected through the Internet, even for those few who had the Internet and the devices did not know how to connect the two. You know?

The worst thing, you know, we do not work with the household with two people or three people. Horror households that on average six to people in three bedrooms. So housing was also an issue and become visible to this schools.

What I wanted to say is advancing equity should not be -- should not just be a slogan. It should not be a beginning chip for votes in the election year. It should be a call from a heart. I think a lot of people are looking out to the leaders of color to advance that. Quite honestly as a person, I do not believe that this should be a struggle for only People of Color and indigenous communities. This should be a battle for all of us. Not just the Black community or Latino community or any other minoritized community.

We have seen the impacts of both COVID-19 and the last few weeks, especially in Minneapolis. But I wanted also to ask a question, you know, around the other, you know, community-owned businesses in the state.

Just this week, I visited two community-owned businesses. They were cafe restaurants and were still closed despite the lifting of restrictions. They were still closed mostly because they have been hit very hard and were not able to benefit from the PPP funding available. Most of this business are run like a family. They may not have payroll records to show to the banks, but it is run by a daughter and her mom. This is things they have been doing over the last many, many, many years.

What specifics are you looking at to help businesses like that? That may not meet traditional or PPP funding requirements? Is there any? I think that is what I wanted to ask you. Things that are not normal for many of the communities before COVID-19 before what happened the last few weeks. Normalcy has been a foreign concept for many in this community. We should not talk about getting normalcy back in November or December this year. I want to know what specifics are you looking at as you convene for the special session.

Thank you so much again for all your time. I am honored to be here.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Thank you so much, Bashir. We have been working on that particular issue for months. And, you know, before -- you know, before we experience the last couple of weeks, this has been a priority for us and has been in our package.

The hold up, to be honest, as we have been looking at the small business funding, that is for the smallest of businesses as you mentioned, I talked to some business leaders at Mercado central like a week and a half ago who mentioned the same thing.

It is like one person or two people. Family-owned. Also looking at micro businesses or entrepreneurs that the funding PPP and otherwise is not getting to folks who need it.

We have been working on this for months. The holdup has been, to be candid with you -- the holdup has been our insistence, the administration's insistence, the Governor and I, including carve outs for minority-owned businesses and ethnic malls.

So that has been our fight and we are going to push for that in special session. And I would like to y'all to help us do that as much as possible. Because we think that that is the best place to get relief.

The other thing I would mention, you know -- we can go ahead, I will have Dominick send some of that information to the rest of the folks to Marie who can get it out with regards to legislation. We need to hear from folks, especially people who are business owners about just the need for that in particular. The other thing I mention as you talked about, distance learning, which has been tremendously hard for so many folks across the state.

You know, even our own family we don't have an extra device laying around that isn't for work. So our district was able to give Chromebooks to kids, but we would have been in a tough spot if that hadn't been the case. We're actively looking at what needs to happen in the fall and we talk about the summer slide, but there is certainly also the COVID slide in this moment. And are trying to figure out how to get kids back safely. And just know that a lot of our kiddos were already behind because of the systemic racism that already existed in our education system and we need to do more as we look into the fall.

I don't have all those answers right now, but it is certainly what we need. I just got a note from one of my staff members that the small business dollars might actually pass today. So now would be the time to call your legislator and ask them to vote for that. But that is one of the pieces in the hold up right now.

I don't know, Commissioner, if you have anything you want to add to that particular question?

>> COMM REBECCA LUCERO: Yeah, thank you so much for the question. I appreciate it. I wanted to share one of the data pieces that we're looking at around distance learning. I will just talk -- give a specific example about what happened in Brooklyn Center. So Brooklyn Center is 85% free and reduced lunch. Proportionally very high rate of POCI folks. When the pandemic started in March, 80% of community there -- of the students there had Internet and 72% had devices.

Now, 92% have stable Internet and nearly 100% have devices. So there are many moving pieces that have to go into this. Because even if you have devices and Internet, it is

incredibly challenging. And it's been really good to see some very clear examples of real movement that will again live past this moment, that now Internet is something that is achievable for almost every family in Brooklyn Center is phenomenal. So we're going to continue to work on this. But it is something that we see deeply impacting all kids and having a disproportionate impact of Students of Color and Indigenous students we're laser focused and happy to see some results that we have already achieved.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Thank you. I have a couple of notes before we hear from Sarah next. First of all, a lot of questions coming in the chat. That is fantastic. We won't have time to get to all of the questions today. We will, however, send a copy of the chat to the Lieutenant Governor and Commissioner so they can see what your questions were at least. We have three speakers left in eight minutes. I am wondering, both the Commissioner and Lieutenant Governor, your schedules are usually back-to-back. I wonder if you have any flexibility to hang on for about 10 minutes extra?

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: I do not, I'm sorry. I don't know about the Commissioner.

>> MARIE ELLIS: Commissioner, how about you?

>> COMM REBECCA LUCERO: I'm so sorry. I will have to run. I can stay on a couple of minutes longer.

>> MARIE ELLIS: No need to apologize. We scheduled this until 2:00. So no apologies necessary.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Also send those questions, if we don't get to everybody, we'll be happy to answer them. One I did see in the chat that I do want to quickly mention. Someone asked if the evictions moratorium ends when the state of emergency ends. The answer is yes. That is why, one, we asked the legislature to re-up that in this moment. And also, in this week, to pass the rental -- the housing assistance bill with \$100 million to ensure that people who haven't been able to pay their rent do not lose their housing, but can get some assistance. So there's a battle about these emergency powers. We're still in a state of emergency. I think they should remain. I think it is contradictory for the Senate to say they will wrap it up in a week but still want to partner with us to figure out how to work on issues around COVID-19 and a response to police reform and accountability. Can't have it both ways.

So that's my editorial comment there.

>> MARIE ELLIS: It is a lot to cover in one week. Let's see. Let's move along and see how far we can get. So Sarah, you are next. We look forward to hearing from you.

>> SARAH CLYNE: All right. Hi, everybody. I'm Sarah Clyne. I'm the Director of Northside Funders Group, we're a funder collaborate that specifically makes investments in north Minneapolis.

So I want to kind of at a high-level talk about our response to both COVID-19 and also to the restoration of communities as a result of the uprising across our city. And also just some thoughts to consider in terms of a response because it will take all of us and multiple revenue streams to think about restoration and rebuilding across the city.

We're working hard to make sure philanthropy does their part. So way back in March, we set out to implement a COVID response. So we held a community call to understand what was happening on the north side. And the impact of the shelter in place mandate. And as a result of that feedback, we created an emergency fund. And really, one of its -- as far as I'm aware -- of its kind across the metro area and maybe across the state, not 100% sure. That gave direct relief to small businesses in the form of a grant. It didn't have any restrictions in terms of use of the funds. They capped at 5,000. To date we raised \$400,000 to fund 89 small businesses. We still have 28 businesses which totals about \$117,000 that we're working on responding to, to round out our COVID response. I can tell you that these were largely Black-owned businesses, that were completely shut out of any local, state and federal relief. I think that's something to consider in terms of response that these are folks that didn't have access to any of these resources. And also didn't have an appetite for another loan product. So really needed financial relief with no strings attached.

So I think that is important to think about in terms of a response. Especially when we are thinking about centering those communities and particularly Black-owned businesses. I want to name that because we're here in this space and the experience we had over the last couple weeks is because we need to center the Black community right now. I think that needs to be prioritized in terms of our response. I want to name that. I think it is important about how we think about an antiracist and true equity response. It is about time we take action instead of just continuing to talk about it

We need to put our money where our mouth is right now. North Minneapolis is also a community that I want to highlight that has experienced significant divestment over the years. And so, again we think about economic recovery, the community needs more resources, and again, we think about the antiracist response, we can't continue to distribute the same amount of dollars across communities and think that that is going to solve all of our problems.

I also want to say that this response needs to be beyond just a one-time fix. We need to think -- we need to think about long-term investments in it the community. I think that is important in terms of a long-term response because we haven't been doing that. We haven't prioritized this in terms of thinking about economic development, wealth creation. I think

those are all important things to think about, and perhaps this is a moment in time when we truly have a conversation, a meaningful one about reparations.

I don't think we've named that. I mean, I think, let's be honest, we're all living -- we benefit from living, working, and playing on stolen land in a community that was built by slaves. We need to talk about that history, and how we got to where we are today. And we need to think about what that looks like in terms of a meaningful response for the benefit of the community, and particularly BIPAC communities but I'm going to name that we need to focus on the Black community right now.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Awesome, thank you, Sarah. The latest conversations on reparations from the legislature was Senator Tomassoni saying reparations should be paid by the people who took down the Columbus statue. I don't think that is the reparations we're interested in talking about. I'm totally down with what you are talking about, I agree with you. I don't know that there is a question in there, just to say yes, to all of that. We are doing as much community engagement as much as we can on Zoom and otherwise with Black business owners. We have to keep it up and figure out what the strategy is the next couple weeks, get it done, done right. And think about the summer and fall and next budget year, what does this look like, for realies.

>> MARIE ELLIS: For realies. Thank you, Sarah. I want to apologize to Ahmed and Sonia, we will not get to your questions or comments. I feel terrible since we invited you to speak. If there is a way, if you want to write down what you were planning on saying in an email or record it, we will make sure it gets to the Commissioner and Lieutenant Governor. Again, I apologize, we're not going to be able to make that happen.

I want to thank again the Lieutenant Governor Flanagan and the Commissioner and our guests that have agreed to speak and help us learn and be in conversation about these issues. We have a lot of work ahead of us. I know MCN and myself personally we're all grateful to be in that work with all of you. With that, I will quote my boss and say... onward. Thank you.

>> LT GOV PEGGY FLANAGAN: Thank you so much, everybody. Send those questions, we're ready to answer them. Take care.

>> MARIE ELLIS: You, too.

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