Statement Regarding the Death of George Floyd and National Uprising Against Racial Injustice

We have reached an inflexion point for our nation and Roberta's House. For over a decade, we have worked with individuals and families to address their grief due to the death of someone close. Today our nation grieves over the havoc caused by the coronavirus pandemic. It has been forced to painfully acknowledge the communal nature of pain stemming from decades of deep-rooted racism and inequality. Now more than ever Roberta's House knows we must not only work to heal families who are grieving, we must also work to heal our nation's collective sorrow.

The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and Tony McDade recently garnered national attention focusing the spotlight back on the racial bias in American law enforcement. *Black Lives Matter* is at the heart of what we do at Roberta's House. As Baltimore faces an escalating death count from coronavirus, our murder rate has continued to climb. 133 Baltimoreans have been killed so far this year. As a result of the pandemic, grieving family members are left without the benefit of traditional rituals that would have helped with their grief. The loss of life, jobs, income and sense of security can be overwhelming.

Whatever the uncertainties are of this moment, there are a few things of which Roberta's House is sure. We are certain that we must prioritize the care of our families and our colleagues. We are also convinced that our work on behalf of those who grieve must continue. We are working to address our communal grief over the loss of life and the loss of humanity in the face of institutionalized racial injustice.

Grief has a mysterious way of moving organically from pain to purpose. However, for many of our neighbors, friends, colleagues and family, this healing process will take time, and they need not do it alone. The purpose derived from our pain is our demand that institutionalized systems that promote hatred and racisms be dismantled.

Every life is precious, and we at Roberta's House are committed to being a clarion voice for healing, peace and equality. We stand with the families and the communities that grieve those who died unreightfully.