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4179 Foxwood Lane
Williamsville NY 14221
June 6, 2014

Ms. Barbara Miller-Williams
427 William Street
Buffalo NY 14204

Dear Ms. Miller-Williams:

Thank you for allowing our Social Justice Committee to attend and speak at your recent Public Safety Committee meeting. We feel our message is important for the well-being of all the residents in the county. Statistics cited in the report prepared by Open Buffalo at our request indicate that our Criminal Justice System does not treat all citizens equally. Often African Americans and Hispanics are branded due to more frequent arrests, convictions and incarcerations. This is indeed THE NEW JIM CROW.

The message of the report is clear: Not that African Americans and Hispanics commit more crimes than do whites, but that when they do, the system treats them differently through the three stages of the Criminal Justice System. Lady Justice has taken her blindfold off and sees with eyes of implicit bias toward those standing before her. There are things you lawmakers can do to correct this injustice:

- Make a public statement of your concern, either as an individual or as a group. Make sure this statement is publicized for all to see.
- Institute a program to identify and correct, if necessary, "implicit bias" in the Sheriff's Department or elsewhere in the Criminal Justice system. The Federal Government provides training for local law enforcements such as "Promoting Fair and Impartial Policing Training." The National Center for State Courts recently completed pilot training programs identifying several strategies for change.
- Pass a resolution (unanimously would be inspiring and effective) stating your common concern for the inequities cited in the report and pledge to find ways to remedy these.
- Hire a consultant to deal with the issue of unfairness in our county system.

Whatever can be done, should be done. Let's all remember the adage:" ***Silence gives consent!"***

Sincerely,

Gloria McLaughlin

Gloria McLaughlin, chair NEW JIM CROW COMMITTEE, St. Joseph's University Parish

We would like to see you take a public stand