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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Attorney Monique Worrell’s Statement on the Tragic Death of Mr. Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee

ORANGE COUNTY, FL (January 30, 2023) — State Attorney Monique Worrell speaks out regarding the tragic death of Mr. Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee.

I am deeply saddened to learn of the tragic death of Mr. Tyre Nichols at the hands of Memphis Police Officers. My deepest sympathies and sincerest condolences go to his family and his community. This is another devastating, yet, preventable death at the hands of law enforcement, and further illustrates the need for Police Reform in the United States.

In this, as in many incidents, we witnessed an attempt to cover the inexcusable acts of violence with a familiar tactic of “victim blaming.” There is no excuse for excessive force, there is no excuse for police violence, and blaming the victim is a common tactic used by perpetrators of that violence, from which law enforcement is not exempt. These actions further promote the fear of law enforcement and reduce the likelihood for compliance in police encounters.

We must come together as a nation on behalf of our citizens and on behalf of the men and women in law enforcement who take seriously their oath to protect and serve, and do so honorably. These deaths can no longer be dismissed as isolated incidents. If we are to remain true to our pledge of, “liberty and justice for all,” we must enact laws that aim to protect those among us who are most vulnerable to police violence.

In this legislative session, I have made the following proposals in an effort to address the safety of the citizens of the State of Florida. I have proposed amendments to the following laws:

- An Officer’s Duty to Intervene;
- Reclassifications of Assault and Battery Offenses Committed by Law Enforcement Officers from Misdemeanors to Felonies;
- Guidelines for Use of Force on School-Aged Children;
- Mandatory Crisis Intervention Team Programs for Law Enforcement Agencies; and
- Mandatory Reporting of Law Enforcement Discipline

This legislation should not be controversial. It is necessary to prevent future acts of violence and to hold officers accountable for acts of violence against the communities they are entrusted to serve.

Seek Justice. Love Mercy. Walk Humbly.

We cannot afford to allow the conversation regarding police violence to lull until the next act of violence occurs. We must take action now in an effort to prevent the next occurrence from happening. Police reform must take place in legislation, policy, and training. It is essential to building stronger, safer communities, and establishing healthy relationships between law enforcement and the community.

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The Office of the State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit is represented by The Honorable Monique H. Worrell and serves Orange and Osceola counties in Central Florida. A culturally diverse community, the area is home to nearly 1.4 million residents and is a vacation destination for millions each year. Our office is committed to making Orlando and the surrounding area a vibrant and safe place to live, work and play.

For general media inquiries, please contact: PIO@sao9.org.

For media records request, please contact: mediarecordsrequest@sao9.org.

For specific media inquiries pertaining to State Attorney Monique Worrell, please contact Keisha Mulfort at kmulfort@sao9.org.

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