

August 6, 2019

ABI statement on El Paso and Ohio shootings:

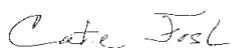
On behalf of the Anne Braden Institute, I write to express a deep sense of shared grief and sorrow to those killed or injured over the weekend in El Paso and Dayton, to all directly affected by the shootings, and to our entire society, which has been so badly damaged by the violence and injustices that infect the very air we breathe.

Reading about the nation's latest mass shooting from abroad was a searing reminder of what a violent society the supposedly American dream has produced. The racist outpouring of anti-LatinX, anti-immigrant hate that drove the massacre in El Paso is truly horrifying, more so because of the hateful, white nationalist rhetoric from the nation's highest office that spurs it forward. And violence like that unleashed in Dayton is undergirded by a misogynist nihilism that is able to thrive due to the wide availability of guns in our midst, coupled with the lack of healthier alternatives denied so very, very many in the USA today.

Tragically, however, mass murders are no longer surprising in the not-so-United States of 2019. Some have asked, how many must die before we put limits on the easy accessibility to weapons across our nation? But it seems there is no such number. Instead, such losses of life have become a twisted new normal. Most Americans still mourn the innocent lives lost in mass shootings, but how long before they are as invisible to those not directly affected as is the desperation and brutality experienced daily by the many hundreds of thousands of U.S. residents routinely denied opportunities, homes, jobs, even emergency medical care by a system that increasingly blames or ignores the poor and denies the racism and other -isms that have polluted our nation from its start? Denial is rampant, and with it comes scapegoating in increasingly virulent forms.

The Braden Institute stands today and always with the many good people who won't or can't look the other way, who continue—often thanklessly—to imagine and strive for a better, more humane, and at last more inclusive country.

Sincerely,



Catherine Fosl, PhD
Director