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[www.LMBA.net](http://www.LMBA.net)

March 25, 2017

For Immediate Release

To: Snohomish County Prosecutor, Snohomish County Council, Snohomish County Executive and Snohomish County Sheriff

**Re: Violence in Snohomish County**

Formed in Seattle in 1968, the Loren Miller Bar Association (LMBA) is a statewide civil rights organization of lawyers, named after famed civil rights attorney Loren Miller who successfully argued *Shelley v. Kraemer*, 334 U.S. 1 (1948). LMBA is Washington's affiliate chapter of the National Bar Association - the oldest minority bar association and largest organization of African American attorneys in the United States, founded in 1925 when the American Bar Association was racially segregated.

For 50 years, LMBA has thrived in its efforts to advance the social and economic well-being of people of color, while improving relations between the legal profession and the community. LMBA's history celebrates the birth, growth, maturation, and success of the Washington African American legal community. Because of this rich history, we are known and respected as the foremost minority bar association in Washington.

In 2017, we are alarmed with the number of recent incidents of violence against members of our community in Snohomish County. We are in communication with the Snohomish County Branch of the NAACP regarding our shared concerns for minorities in Snohomish County; and are supportive of their attention into these matters.

We are disturbed by the disappearance and later discovery of young Ben Keita's body hanging from a tree in Lake Stevens. It is our understanding that the circumstances are being investigated by multiple enforcement agencies and we are eager to learn what is uncovered.

We are also deeply troubled by accounts provided about the shooting of a 17 year old youth in Arlington on February 14. To learn that the officers involved in her shooting have returned to work, without the public seeing the results of the investigation causes additional concern. The Snohomish County Branch of the NAACP is requesting an independent, civilian review of the circumstances and we support their request.

We have also heard about a possible hate crime at a bus stop, in which a Black man was stabbed because he was looking at a White woman. And another possible hate crime against a mixed-race couple whose vehicle was stolen and vandalized.

These and other recent incidents in Snohomish County have prompted LMBA to reach out to local officials at this time. We are interested in the outcomes of the investigations into the above events; and in the response from our local officials in these matters.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chalia Stallings-Ala'ilima  
*President*  
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