

### MDF Statement on Racial Equity

The MDF Team is saddened and horrified by the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers last week. The nationwide outrage over this brutal act has prompted a searing national confrontation with the continued legacy and realities of racism against Black Americans. It is a stark call for us all to confront how racism impacts our lives, our communities, and our work – and what we will do about it.

For MDF's core mission to drive sustainable economic improvement across the state to succeed, we must recognize and address the impact that racism and bias have on economic opportunity and prosperity. Increasing prosperity is not true progress unless it is equitably shared. Economic opportunity is not real unless it can be equitably accessed.

Maine needs the contributions of everyone if we are to achieve a vibrant sustainable economy and a high quality of life. Discrimination and racism – whether explicit, implicit, or systemic -- rob human beings of dignity, fairness, and opportunity, and undermine our economy by depriving Maine of crucial creativity, talent, and growth for all.

MDF is committed to being part of the necessary changes and solutions, and to partner in building an equitable economy and communities in Maine. We have not done enough in our past work to spotlight and spur action on racial and other disparities in Maine's economy. We will redouble our efforts to:

- Deepen our own understanding of racial equity, implicit bias, and systemic racism and incorporate this awareness into our actions and our work; we understand this challenge is magnified by the limited diversity of our current staff and board
- Strive through our programs and partnerships to address racial disparities and the impacts of systemic racism, working to ensure that all communities of color and indigenous peoples in Maine share in economic opportunity and prosperity
- Support and equip Maine leaders to collaboratively take on the urgent challenges of racial and other disparities in our economy, workplaces, organizations, and communities

These efforts are particularly critical as we simultaneously grapple with the COVID-19 health crisis and the resulting economic fallout – both of which have disproportionately impacted individuals and communities of color.

We write this in the humility of recognizing our own knowledge and expertise are limited, and our own contributions to impacting the enormity of this issue are only a small part of a larger change – but nonetheless it is critical to take on. We know that we will be judged by our actions and not these words.

As we always have, we invite our stakeholders to undertake this journey also and inform, share, and partner with us in shaping impactful work.

We look forward to this work to build a strong, equitable, and inclusive Maine economy ... together.