From:	Public Testimony
To:	Rice, Howard
Cc:	Sanders, Monica
Subject:	FW: Public Testimony in Support of Ordinance #200559
Date:	Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:50:20 PM

200559

Please attach. thanks

From: Michael Kelley <michaelckelley22@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Public Testimony <Public.Testimony@kcmo.org>
Subject: Public Testimony in Support of Ordinance #200559

Members of the Finance, Governance, and Public Safety Committee:

I am writing this testimony to express my **support** for the adoption of Ordinance #200559 and to ask you to vote in favor of adopting this measure. I support the adoption of the legislation because I believe it meets the moment of racial tension we are living in and because it brings together the appropriate stakeholders with whom the City should work to take action.

First, I believe this measure meets the moment because it gets us away from actions and fights on individual monuments or public spaces and instead orients us towards the sort of systemic approach that is needed. A big part of the reason why there was such surprise at the upheaval we have witnessed in the aftermath of the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor is the fact that we have turned a blind eye to the atrocities we have inflicted upon our fellow Americans.

To collectively work to remove the glory that some individuals and groups never deserved in the first place is to remove a blindfold to the greater, painful truth that these monuments and other symbols have sought to conceal. We must see Kansas City for what it is if we are to exist and thrive within it, and this ordinance helps us to do that.

Second, beyond the symbolic nature, there is the very real element of representation that makes this a strong measure as well. Beyond the geographic considerations, there is also the requirement that the commission created by this ordinance include a historian, a civil rights activist, a religious scholar, and a representative of an Indigenous organization. The reason this is important is because a diverse cross-section of our community is needed to fully appreciate the gravity and nuance of this discussion and to effectively search for the elements that must be removed. A scholarly approach, coupled with the insights of people who have been on the ground working to bring these offenses and much more to light, gives us the best chance of identifying as much as possible what needs to be cast away.

In conclusion, I ask the members of the committee to vote in **favor** of adopting Ordinance #200559.

Thank you.

Michael Kelley
Resident of the 5th District