



February 8, 2021

Hon. Stephen Isherwood
Rhode Island District Court
J. Joseph Garrahy Judicial Complex
One Dorrance Plaza
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Judge Isherwood:

Black Lives Matter RI has watched *State of Rhode Island v. Richard Gordon* with great interest because of the impact it has on the greater African American, and people of color, community. The negative effect of racism and white supremacy must be called out and we rely on our justice system to use all of its power to do the right thing. Thank you for providing Black Lives Matter RI with the opportunity to submit this statement so that we can explain what Richard Gordon's actions mean to our community.

What Mr. Gordon did to Mr. Pahlavi is despicable. He used the N-word, and called him a "raghead," to dehumanize him and make him feel like he is less than, because Richard Gordon did not think of him as white enough. Plain and simple. Richard Gordon's words show that there is no question that his assault of Bahram Pahlavi was motivated by racism and prejudice, and that it should be punishable as a hate crime. This blatant bigotry has no place in our society and we are counting on you to use the law and send the message that it will not be tolerated.

Black Lives Matter RI is working in the community everyday to educate people about equality and unity. We have been the voice for anyone who has been discriminated against because of their race. It is on all of us to work towards this goal of a more equitable State.

We respectfully ask that you send the message to Mr. Gordon that his actions and words were clearly motivated by racism and prejudice and use the hate crime enhancement to its fullest capacity under the law.

In solidarity,

Brother *Gary* Dantzler

Brother Gary Dantzler
Executive Director