



**A STATEMENT FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY STATE'S
ATTORNEY ON THE JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA SHOOTING**

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Once again, our nation is grappling with the aftermath of a crime fueled by hate and I am deeply saddened. My thoughts and prayers go out to the families and loved ones of the victims.

Three innocent Black lives have been taken by a 21-year-old white man in Jacksonville, Florida for no reason — other than the color of their skin. The attack, which occurred at a Dollar General store in a predominantly Black neighborhood, shows that racism remains a significant threat in our country, and it prevents all residents from enjoying the rights and freedoms promised in this nation. The shooter professed his hate for Black people in the writings he left behind. Again, evidencing that racism in our country, still lives. I condemn hate. I condemn discrimination. I condemn violence. No one should be afraid or intimidated because of their race, gender, religion or other factor.

In Maryland, I recognized the need for a tougher hate crime law after the vicious killing of Lt. Richard Collins, III, who was an African American. That is why I took the lead in successfully advocating for change that strengthened the law to now allow prosecutors across the state, to appropriately charge and successfully prosecute offenders. Today, and moving forward my team and I stand with the community of Jacksonville as it seeks justice and works together towards healing.