An Open Letter to the Purdue Community:

Over the course of the past week, many of you have been made aware of a recent flyering and chalking campaign that was carried out across campus by Students for Life of Purdue University. This letter serves to address the reactions to our campaign, as well as the concerns of those we spoke with at our Monday meeting. Upon reading this letter, it is our hope that many will come to understand with greater clarity what our organization stands for and the purpose of this campaign.

First and foremost, we would like to apologize for the pain this campaign has caused. It was never our intent to shame or condemn any group of people, either the black community or post abortive women, or to make any person feel discriminated against. Rather, we sought to draw attention to how abortion inflicts disproportionate harm onto the black community (including both its born and unborn members) through factors such as misinformation, targeting from the abortion industry, discrimination, and racial inequality.

Although black pro-life activists have also done so in the past, we recognize the harm we caused by using slogans from the Black Lives Matter movement. In pursuit of a greater good we coopted language that we did not fully grasp the implications of, and in doing so inadvertently caused a lot of anger and a lot of hurt. We apologize for this, as it was never our purpose to divert attention from other important issues that affect the black community. We chose to use the language and slogans we did because African American leaders and activists in the pro-life movement have done so, and we sought to emulate them in order to bring awareness to these issues. We know now that it would have been wise to reach out to the Black Cultural Center and other African American groups and get their input in order to avoid this exact problem- poor communication on our part caused not by malice, but by not realizing exactly how our words would affect the black community on campus.

The way in which we tried to bring these issues to light has created the notion on campus that we are racist, that we think black women are bad mothers, or that we want to shame and bully people into agreeing with us. None of this is true. On the contrary, the flyers were posted to draw attention to a uniquely cruel way the black community has been discriminated against by the abortion industry through generations of miseducation and deliberate targeting. We spoke of black children being “endangered” not because black women are hostile towards children, but because Planned Parenthood is hostile towards them. We want to protect black lives. We want to support women in crisis. And we seek to help students of any race or ethnicity, who may be post-abortive, to find the helpful resources they need to find healing. This type of empowerment should be embraced by those who care about black lives.

Moving forward, we will listen to and advocate alongside minorities, always including them in discussions where their concerns are involved. In our meeting this week, it seemed that the biggest problem with our message was caused not by what we said, but *how* we said it; the flyers we posted were too vague, allowed too much room for speculation, and used coopted language. We will avoid future miscommunication and offense by being better communicators- by being less vague in our writing, more careful with our wording, and most importantly by seeking out and listening to the voices of others. When we speak on behalf of the voiceless- the

unborn- we can't ask them for input. We can, however, listen to the voices of the black community at Purdue, and our goal from this point forward is to always include them in discussions where their concerns are involved.

Students for Life of Purdue University is dedicated to promoting equality for all human beings regarding our most basic right: our right to be alive. We are particularly passionate about protecting that right for a group in our society that has no voice to speak for themselves: the preborn. From studying embryology and holding on to a firm belief in human equality, we know that the preborn are living human beings and that abortion unjustly takes their lives from them. As an organization, we seek to foster a society that acknowledges and protects human life at all stages. We tirelessly advocate for and make unceasing efforts to support pregnant and parenting students so that no woman in a difficult situation has to choose between being a student and being a parent; we seek to empower her to do both. We also seek to help post-abortive men and women acquire the healing they need. (See helpful resources below.)

Finally, while we regret and apologize for the way our message was delivered, we stand by the core of the message itself: abortion statistics in the black community represent gross civil rights injustice. Our core beliefs involve defending all minorities that are often discriminated against, including the preborn and pregnant or parenting students. Since it is Black History Month, we thought it appropriate to address how, both historically and presently, abortion impacts the black community. Because we care about black lives, including those in the womb, we are deeply disturbed by how the abortion industry and factors such as discrimination, poverty, and racial inequality inflict such disproportionately high abortion rates onto the black community. This is not a matter of political opinion- it's simply about numbers. Abortion rates for African Americans are up to five times higher than those of the white population. In New York City, for instance, black children are more likely to be aborted than to be born- for every 1000 births, 1180 children are aborted (source: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene). This happens in part because black communities are being targeted by the abortion industry and propagandized to believe that the preborn are subhuman. They are taught that abortion centers such as Planned Parenthood are the only source of reproductive healthcare, and are not offered the support they need to parent. This routine of systematic misinformation is worthy of being brought to the attention of our academic environment.

In order to encourage dialogue between our group and the rest of the community, we pledge to make our leadership team available to any members of the Purdue community who would like to have a respectful conversation about this subject. While we may disagree on the morality of abortion, it is our hope that we can overcome our differences in order to understand that people on all sides of the abortion issue are well-intended, yet can criticize an idea without demonizing the people that believe that idea. At Purdue, we claim: "What we make moves the world forward." Together, let us not only stand behind our creed, but make our community aware of the truth, and put it into action. Thank you.

For Life,

Students for Life of Purdue University

For pregnancy assistance or help accessing post-abortion healing, email pregnancyhelppurdue@gmail.com. Contact us with questions at prolifepurdue@gmail.com.