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President & CEO Kristin Brown Reacts to the Daniel Prude Grand Jury Decision

“I am deeply disappointed in the grand jury’s vote not to indict any of the police officers involved in the death of Daniel Prude. As the leader of a legal services provider in Rochester whose mission is to make the law work for all New Yorkers, I respect the decision of the grand jury. However, this outcome feels neither just nor does it provide a resolution for the events on March 22 leading to Daniel Prude’s death. It is one of the many instances where police officers, and existing systemic structures failed Daniel Prude, his family, and communities of color.

But there are things we can do. First, I urge the passage of Daniel’s Law, which would create mental health units trained and equipped to deescalate mental health crises in emergency situations, including those coping with substance abuse. Second, we need to carefully examine and reform legal standards surrounding deadly force when police officers cause death of civilians in the line of duty. And third, we need a police force that cares about, and is rooted in community needs,” said Kristin Brown, President and CEO of Empire Justice Center.

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Empire Justice Center is a statewide, multi-issue, multi-strategy, public interest law firm focused on changing the “systems” within which poor and low-income families live. Empire Justice protects and strengthens the legal rights of people in New York State who are poor, disabled or disenfranchised through: systems change advocacy, training and support to other advocates and organizations, and high quality direct civil legal representation. Empire Justice has offices in Albany, Rochester, Yonkers, White Plains and Central Islip on Long Island. For more information, please visit empirejustice.org.