



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***National Alliance to End Homelessness Statement
on the Killing of Jordan Neely***

May 8, 2023, Washington, D.C. – The National Alliance to End Homelessness today mourns the loss of Jordan Neely, an unhoused person who was killed in a senseless act of violence on a New York City subway car last week. Mr. Neely, a well-known street performer who had suffered significant trauma in his short life, was yet another victim of our nation’s homelessness crisis – a crisis that causes avoidable deaths every day due to violence, severe weather, neglect, addiction, and illness.

The Alliance demands justice for Jordan Neely, and it calls for the following actions:

1. For Mayor Eric Adams and the New York City Police Department to immediately arrest Daniel Penny, who was recorded choking Mr. Neely to death in front of countless witnesses, and who was released by the NYPD without being charged in his death. There can be no doubt that if Mr. Neely, a Black man experiencing homelessness, had committed a similar crime, he would have been arrested or killed on site. The decision to allow Penny to walk free clearly demonstrates the inequitable standard of justice for people of color and marginalized communities in this nation.
2. For elected officials across the nation to root out and actively combat the hateful rhetoric towards people experiencing homelessness that drives violence against our unhoused neighbors. Across the nation, elected officials – including Mr. Adams and countless other mayors, city council members, governors, state legislators, and former president Donald Trump – have aggressively positioned people experiencing homelessness as a threat to their communities. In the face of a nationwide shortage of affordable housing and a growing homelessness crisis, this language is divisive, dehumanizing, and ultimately it was deadly for Jordan Neely. It serves no purpose other than to divide the electorate, incite violence, and cravenly justify harmful and deeply racist policies to criminalize people for not having a home.
3. For elected officials to reject legislative actions that criminalize people experiencing homelessness for existing in public spaces. Over the past two years, efforts to criminalize homelessness and force unhoused people into internment camps have been rapidly introduced by state legislatures and other politicians. These efforts deny people experiencing homelessness their basic human dignity, distract the public from the affordable housing investments that every community needs, and send a strong message that people who cannot afford housing are not welcome in their communities. This approach is not a solution. It is simply an attempt to divide voters against one another by villainizing the most vulnerable members of society.

4. For federal, state, and local leaders to adequately fund interim solutions and invest in affordable housing and behavioral health services to address the needs of families, youth, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is a crisis that demands honest leadership. At this moment, it is essential that elected officials recognize their roles in endangering the most vulnerable members of our society, and embrace their responsibilities to unite their communities around proven solutions to end homelessness.

Today we mourn the loss of Jordan Neely and remember the countless others who have lost their lives in this crisis. Jordan Neely – like every single American – deserved the safety of a stable home. No American deserves to die for the lack of one.

About the National Alliance to End Homelessness

The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a nonprofit, non-partisan, organization committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States. As a leading voice on the issue of homelessness, the Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, cost-effective policy solutions; works collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity; and provides data and research to policymakers and elected officials in order to inform policy debates and educate the public and opinion leaders nationwide.

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