

THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. JONES

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

BLACK LIVES MATTER SEATTLE-
KING COUNTY, ABIE EKENEZAR,
SHARON SAKAMOTO, MURACO
KYASHNA-TOCHA, ALEXANDER
WOLDEAB, NATHALIE GRAHAM,
AND ALEXANDRA CHEN,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF SEATTLE,

Defendant.

No. 2:20-cv-00887-RAJ

DECLARATION OF SHARON A.
SAKAMOTO IN SUPPORT OF MOTION
FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING
ORDER

I, Sharon A. Sakamoto, declare and state as follows:

1. I have been a Seattle, Washington resident for over 70 years and I did not participate in any protests in Seattle between May 30, 2020, and June 6, 2020, because I was afraid of the police's use of force at protests. The information contained in this declaration is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I am of majority age and competent to testify about the matters set forth herein.

2. I was born in Camp Minidoka in Idaho on September 20, 1943, to incarcerated Japanese American parents, both US citizens. Growing up in post-war America as a Japanese American child born in one of the camps has greatly shaped my world view and perspective. I

1 have always been keenly aware of the flagrant discrimination and disparate treatment faced by
2 communities of color across the US and particularly in Seattle. This led me to dedicate my
3 career to help my Japanese American community and communities of color. I am now a retired
4 attorney. While practicing, I provided community and legal services primarily to the
5 underserved Japanese American community.

6 3. When my fellow Americans rose up in response to the death of George Floyd and
7 the numerous other black Americans killed by the police, I believed and hoped our country had
8 finally reached a historical turning point. I felt the energy and American spirit in the movement
9 and messages of the people. I passionately desired to participate in the protests taking place in
10 Seattle. I knew the risks associated with protesting amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. But I still
11 wanted to protest. I would have worn a mask and stayed away from others at a six-foot distance.

12 4. However, I did not participate in any protests between May 30 and June 6 in
13 Seattle because I was too afraid and intimidated by the violent police response. I saw coverage
14 of the protests in the media and was frightened by the force that the police were using against
15 protesters.

16 5. I feel passionately about the years of blatant injustices suffered by black
17 Americans and other people of color at the hands of police. I wanted to make my voice heard,
18 especially in light of my family's incarceration during WWII. I am extremely proud of all the
19 young people who have showed up to peacefully protest as part of this movement. I wish I felt
20 safe enough to join them.

21 6. If the police stopped using blast balls, and indiscriminately using tear gas and
22 pepper spray (and other chemical irritants), I would gladly and proudly join the protests and
23 exercise my First Amendment right to assemble. I would want to add my voice to the call, the
24 demand, that my government must change especially because current policing is done in a
25 manner that devalues Black lives.
26

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

Executed this 8th day of June 2020 at Seattle, Washington.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States and the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

By: 
SHARON A. SAKAMOTO