



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT

### KEEP YOUR SPIT TO YOURSELF!

**DETROIT (July 24, 2018)** – Today, Robert Stanzler of Ferndale was arraigned in 36<sup>th</sup> District Court after being charged with assault and battery. On July 17<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Stanzler, in an act of rage and total disrespect, spit in the face of security guard Ibrahim Mission. This most despicable act is tantamount to reaching down to the lowest level in the degradation of one person to another. It indicates a total disrespect and dehumanization for one's own humanity. After his arraignment, Mr. Stanzler received a \$5,000 conditional bond and is due back in court for a pre-trial hearing on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Detroit Branch NAACP condemns this act of degradation, humiliation, and possible even racial discrimination. Ibrahim Mission is a responsible young man, doing a significant job in the area of security for many community organizations. As a matter of fact, he was on his job when this incident occurred. He has worked on many programs for security including the Annual NAACP Fight For Freedom Fund Dinner. The event in which he was attacked unfortunately was an occasion where visitors from around the world were in Detroit to attend the "Good Pitch" social justice gathering. It was a major media event. Regardless of the event, spitting in one's face is unacceptable for any occasion.

The courts must meet out justice in this instance. It is appropriate that Mr. Stanzler apologize. It is appropriate that the owners of the Eastern Market - Scott Rutterbush, Rakash Lala, and David Brown - also issued a statement regarding their *"disappointment and the unfortunate insulting behavior of Mr. Stanzler."* This demonstrates clearly the need for diversity training, racial sensitivity, and appreciation for different cultural values. Coming up as a child, spitting on any person was one of the worst offenses one could be engaged in according to my grandmother. We were severely punished and rebuked in our home for committing such an offense. If Detroit is truly to be a city that appreciates all people, then such incidents as the one which occurred at the Eastern, next door to the Detroit Mercantile Company (owned by Mr. Stanzler) must be identified and rooted out. It is good to have an apology. However, an apology without a plan of correction is inadequate. Diversity training should occur, and justice should be served. A zero-tolerance policy for such activity should be made mandatory for business owners and their employees. As a co-founder of the clothing brand 'Made In Detroit', Robert Stanzler must know that spitting on another individual is certainly **NOT MADE IN DETROIT**. Quite the contrary, it must be ended in Detroit.

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