



OKLAHOMA CITY - Following are the remarks made by Alicia Andrews, Chair of the Oklahoma Democratic Party at today's Oklahoma City press conference.

I stand here today because I can no longer be silent. I reluctantly stand here today because I had hoped that the Oklahoma County DA would come around to reason either through his own conscience or by listening to the voices of those he was elected to protect. But...I stand here today because sometimes, HOPE is not enough.

Dr. King said, "We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope." Those words are why I am here today.

The District Attorney of Oklahoma County is a Democrat. I know it is very unusual for one Democratic leader to criticize another. But today I have no choice.

I am supremely disappointed because, it seems, that DA Prater has a rating scale of whose lives are worth protecting and whose lives are insignificant. I stand here today for Israel Ortiz, Eric Ruffin, and Malachai Davis who are charged with TERRORISM. I also stand here today for the other dozen young activists being held on excessive bond from \$200,000 to \$1,000,000. And I also stand here for Christian Council, the Realtor, the gay man who was beaten unconscious, while his attackers yelled homophobic slurs at him.

It is my sincerest hope that my disappointment will be finite. I hope that DA Prater will cease the egregious display of abuse of power and reduce the charges to something more in line with the alleged crime. I hope that DA Prater will recognize that he is attempting to rob them of their first amendment right by violating the eighth amendment. And in that recognition, he will remember that he was elected to represent ALL of Oklahoma county, not just the few.

The Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution states: "Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted." I know that this is a federal law, but does it not apply locally?

The Realtor who was attacked is worthy of protection. He was beaten unconscious. He will most likely be haunted by that attack for the rest of his life. His attackers on the other hand were protected. They beat a man, while shouting homophobic slurs and will, at most, have a misdemeanor record. Their futures unmarred. The young men in jail around the corner, on the other hand, allegedly blocked a street, allegedly broke some glass and will have a felony arrest on their records forever.

