

# FRIENDS OF LOWELL FOUNDATION CONDEMNS POLITICAL VIOLENCE

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On September 11, 2001, nearly 3,000 innocent lives were stolen in a single morning of terror. That act of political violence was meant to break our nation's spirit and silence our way of life. The United States pushed back.

Today, as we condemn yesterday's violent assassination of Charlie Kirk, we must recognize that the deeper tragedy is the assault on the First Amendment itself. Violence against speech is violence against liberty.

Murder is murder. This is not simply a life taken, but the erosion of our right to debate, to dissent, and to think freely without fear of retribution. At Lowell, we defended merit-based admissions, stood with Jewish students and faculty, and supported all students — Asian, white, black, Latino — only to be smeared and vilified. This corrosion of civic life must stop. As John Adams warned, "Liberty, once lost, is lost forever."

The First Amendment means nothing if it only protects voices we agree with. Its very essence is the protection of the dissenter. To remain silent in the face of political violence is to surrender freedom itself. We will not be silent. We will choose courage — and we call on all Americans to do the same.