

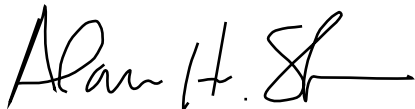
To my ACEC/MD colleagues,

These are indeed challenging times for our industry and society as a whole. While there are men and women far more eloquent than I, it is at times like these where we need to use our individual and collective voice for change. What we've witnessed firsthand or through other's accounts, creates a wide range of emotions in each of us. In such a short period, we've seen the best of us and the worst. While inspiring that so many have peacefully protested, the fact they need to protest is painful. The heartbreak and emotions resulting from George Floyd's senseless death has truly shaken our lives, and it should.

As an industry that continues to battle for greater inclusion and diversity, it is even more important now to be heard. Racism, exclusion and like behaviors have no place in our industry or society. ACEC/MD is a collection of firms diverse in size and staff who advocate and lobby for fair business practices in the engineering industry. It is now time for us to use our voices in advocacy, to fight an all too familiar foe.

We must also not forget that ACEC/MD and our entire industry is a collection of people, each dealing with a range of emotions. Reach out to your colleagues to discuss the issues. Don't avoid the reaction and discussion and be proactive to learn and grow from each other. As has been said by many, it is our differences that unite us. I encourage each of us to contribute in our own way to heal as a community. We must continue to fight racism and inequality and embrace these simple principles in our culture.

Please continue to be safe and well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alan H. Straus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Alan H. Straus

President
ACEC - Maryland