

LWV Statement on Guilty Verdict in Trial for the Murder of Ahmaud Arbery

WASHINGTON and BRUNSWICK, GA — Today, the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Georgia issued the following statement in response to a jury finding Travis McMichael, Gregory McMichael, and William "Roddie" Bryan guilty of the murder of Ahmaud Arbery.

"Today justice was served. While a verdict cannot bring back Ahmaud Arbery, the truth prevailed.

"Nevertheless, this case also clearly exemplifies the need for reform in our judicial system, which in many places throughout this country continues to allow countless racially motivated murders to [go unpunished](#) as a result of white supremacy. Fortunately, today, the jury made the correct decision in what has been aptly called a 'modern day lynching.'

"As an organization focused on the uplifting of all American voices, we are struck by the numerous ways in which Black voices were silenced throughout this case. They include:

- The court denying Black constituents, who make up more than a quarter of the population where Mr. Arbery was murdered, fair representation in the jury; despite the prosecutor's protests, [eleven of the twelve jurors](#) in Mr. Arbery's case were white.
- The defendant's legal team explicitly attempting to [bar "black pastors"](#) from the courtroom, with one lawyer claiming that their presence alone was racial intimidation against white jurors.
- The defense filing for mistrial, arguing that Mr. Arbery's mother's sobs in court were unfairly influencing the jury (despite Travis McMichael also crying on the stand). Their request was denied.

"A court that silences its constituents cannot be just. A system built on racism cannot curb racist violence. In this case, despite overwhelming racial prejudice, justice was still served. Yet this was the exception to the rule.

"We cannot and will not rest on this verdict. Immediate action must be taken to reform our criminal justice system. The health of our nation depends on it."

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