

**Remarks by Don Lewis on his appointment as  
Ramsey County Special Prosecutor  
July 29, 2016**

Thank you, John. Good morning, everyone.

I am a Ramsey County native. So is my wife. We both grew up in the Rondo area of St. Paul. Our three children live here.

I have a lot invested in this community. So, when John Choi contacted me about this appointment, I felt both honored and compelled to accept it. *Honored* because of the confidence that he has displayed in me and my law practice. *Compelled* because of the call to serve my community and its criminal justice system at a time when many view it with anxiety and mistrust.

The death of Philando Castile earlier this month is a tragedy.

We all understand the anguish and outrage that many of our residents feel about the loss of yet another black man in an

encounter with a police officer. We all see how this incident, and others like it around the country, have caused deep divisions within our society. And—in this case and others like it—we are all asking hard questions and seeking answers.

Here and now, it is important that the BCA conclude a careful and thorough investigation into the shooting death of Mr.

Castile, and that John make an impartial and just decision about how the criminal justice system should respond to the facts revealed by that investigation.

It is even more critical that the public perceives his decision as fact-based, even-handed and transparent.

I am committed to helping John and his office achieve these outcomes.

I also share his vision for my role on the county attorney's team.

I agree that those empowered to decide whether and how to prosecute must be accountable to the public, and I understand why John has chosen not to delegate his public responsibility.

At the same time, John has assured me that my involvement in the decision-making will be substantial, meaningful and visible.

My hope—whatever the outcome—is that my work with John's office will earn the trust and confidence of the residents of Ramsey County and the State of Minnesota, and especially the trust and confidence of those who today expect the least and fear the worst from our criminal justice system.

Again, John, thank you for this opportunity. I appreciate the work that you've done as County Attorney and the reputation you and your office have earned to promote social justice and I'm proud to assist your office in continuing that fine tradition.