

Faith Leaders Urge Governor Braun to Respond

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Lt. Governor Micah Beckwith's ongoing attempts to justify his praise of the Three-Fifths Compromise are historically false. They are morally reprehensible and deeply injurious to the people he claims to serve. In recent interviews, rather than take responsibility for his words, he has doubled down, claiming that Governor Mike Braun “*agrees with him*,” and insisting that he “*works for the people*.” We want to be crystal clear:

- The Three-Fifths Compromise was not a “*great move*.”
- It was a tool of racial suppression, a political calculation that reduced Black lives to legislative fractions.
- It did not pave the way for abolition, it protected the power of slaveholding states.
- To glorify it today is not leadership, it is an act of dangerous revisionism.

If Lt. Governor Beckwith truly “*works for the people*,” then he must start by respecting the full humanity of all people, especially those whose ancestors bore the weight of America’s original sin. His refusal to retract these comments is not just disappointing, it is disqualifying. It reveals a fundamental lack of understanding about the pain, legacy, and resilience of Black communities in Indiana and across this nation.

While he claims solidarity with Governor Braun, the Governor’s halfhearted response, saying only that he “*doesn’t like*” the remarks fall dramatically short of what is required. This moment calls for more than discomfort. It calls for moral clarity.

We do not need leaders who:

- Numb our consciences with half-truths,
- Rewrite history to protect privilege,
- Or sanitize slavery as political savvy.

We need leaders who tell the truth, even when it's uncomfortable. We need leaders who honor history, even when it convicts us. Leaders who stand for justice, especially when it costs them politically.

We are calling on Governor Braun once again, this time with greater urgency to publicly and unequivocally condemn Lt. Governor Beckwith's remarks. Anything less is complicity. Anything less is an endorsement of ignorance over integrity.

We are not three-fifths. We are whole. We are worthy. We are watching.

Rev. David W. Greene, Sr., President, Concerned Clergy of Indianapolis

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