

**Fuller** cont'd from pg 1

"I will be leaving my position as Multnomah County Health Department Director at close of business today. I am grateful that it is possible for me to step back from high pressure full-time work and pursue my many other passions."

Fuller held her leadership position since 2013 and presided over a budget of \$336 million and 1,400 employees.

County Chair Deborah Kafoury has asked deputy director Wendy Lear to step in as interim director in the short term.

Fuller's departure came days after Multnomah County settled with Tillman over

spring after questions about her conduct — held a press conference Wednesday afternoon asking that Fuller's retirement not be the end of the conversation about systemic racism within the county.

"Beyond any one employee or human resources situation, there exists entrenched bias that can be found in the pattern and practice of discrimination as experienced by so many county employees of color," wrote Smith in a statement Monday. Allegations against Smith were not substantiated by an internal investigation.

"For this reason I renew my call to Chair Kafoury to order an

**“I hope that the community continues to hold the County's feet to the fire to address issues of systemic racism**

what the former public health director called "institutional racism and disparate treatment" regarding her dismissal.

In a detailed letter to Kafoury, Tillman explained how — upon returning to the county in July after an approved Family and Medical Leave — "I was told by Joanne (Fuller) that my role as Public Health Director 'was not working out' and we needed to plan my 'graceful' exit from the county..."

Tillman holds an impeccable track record of health equity work, on both the state and county levels, and flawless performance records, as shared by the *Portland Tribune* and released under Oregon's records law.

Her performance review from 2016 was peppered with positive remarks, including this from Fuller: "Tricia has a wonderful calming style that helps people focus on the work at hand... I am very pleased with her work and the work of the public health division this year."

Tuesday Multnomah County released the results of an internal investigation saying human relations staff did not find any evidence Tillman's race or protected leave were negative factors in her continued employment.

County commissioner Loretta Smith — who was investigated this

investigation into the county's Human Resources Department, the handling of these cases by the county attorney, as well as how her own executive office processes complaints when lodged at the highest levels," she continued.

The county has agreed to pay Tillman administrative leave from Sept. 14 through to Aug. 14, 2018, in addition to a sum of \$25,000 and a letter of reference.

In response to her settlement, Tillman issued the following statement through her lawyer, Dana Sullivan:

"I have opted to put this situation behind me in order to focus on my family and move forward in my career. Even though my dispute with the county has been resolved, I hope that the community continues to hold the county's feet to the fire to address issues of systemic racism and support others who came forward with their courageous stories during the 9/15 hearing."

The Sept. 15 hearing refers to a public forum, called at the behest of Kafoury, where more than a dozen people testified about experiencing or observing systemic racism within the county's workforce.

The hearing prompted the chair to launch a strategy to address complaints of racist and unjust employment practices.

**NFL Anthem Protests Evolve Past Kaepernick's Original Intent**

Buffalo Bills players kneel during the national anthem prior to an NFL football game against the Denver Broncos, Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017, in Orchard Park, N.Y.

By **Jesse J. Holland and Errin Haines Whack**  
*Associated Press Writers*

**W**hat began more than a year ago with a lone NFL quarterback protesting police brutality against minorities by kneeling silently during the national anthem before games has grown into a roar with hundreds of players sitting, kneeling, locking arms or remaining in locker rooms — their reasons for demonstrating as varied as their methods.

Yet people rallying to defend players or decry the protests aren't talking about police brutality, or the fact that former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick is no longer employed by an NFL team. Especially after President Donald Trump weighed in repeatedly to say that players should stand for the anthem or be fired for their defiance.

Before NFL games began Sunday, the discourse had morphed into a debate over the First Amendment, Trump's insults, how much the NFL has been paid by the U.S. government for its displays of patriotism and the overall state of race relations in America. Support and criticism came from fields well beyond the gridiron, including NASCAR, the NBA, MLB, activists, journalists, entertainers and politicians.

Some worry that the expanded reasoning for the protests — fanned by the president's incendiary stance — could dilute the passion and the permanence of its original cause, drawing attention to interactions between police and minorities.

"The issue has mor-

phed beyond that because Mr. Trump has interceded," the Rev. Jesse Jackson said.

More than 200 NFL players and owners — even anthem performers — found ways to show dissent during pro football games over the weekend. Raised fists and other gestures came after Trump's comments at a Friday night rally

in Huntsville, Alabama, where he mused to the crowd: "Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, 'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now! Out! He's fired. Fired!'"

Trump's remarks set off a firestorm on social media. Ken Miles, a community organizer

and entrepreneur living in Harlem, created a petition on Saturday around the emerging #TakeTheKnee hashtag in response.

"This weekend was just a reminder of the role that power plays in this conversation," said Miles, 32. "The president of the United States leveraging his influence to call out players exercising their rights is an abuse of power."

The topic continued to dominate discussion in sports Monday as NFL players reflected, NBA teams met with reporters and Trump doubled down on his position with tweets, saying the issue had nothing to do with race and using the hashtag "#StandForOurAnthem."

"He doesn't understand the power that he has for being the leader of this beautiful country," Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James said.

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