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**Law Enforcement Leaders Push Back on FBI Director's Comments on "Viral Video Effect"**

*Chairman of National Law Enforcement Group and Former Top Police Chief Says Comments Ignore Historically-Low Crime Rates and Detract from Needed Conversations about Reform*

In response to FBI Director James Comey's assertions yesterday that violent crime is increasing across the country and that spike is due to a so-called "viral video effect" of police officers fearing intensified public scrutiny, **Ronal Serpas, chairman of Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration, which represents over 165 police chiefs and head prosecutors from across the country**, issued the following statement:

"Director Comey's recent comments about a 'viral video effect' are unfounded, and frankly, damaging to the efforts of law enforcement. I've talked to police officers around the country who are deeply offended by ongoing speculation that crime is increasing because we're scared of the public, and afraid to do our jobs. In fact, our country is experiencing historically low crime rates, and recent analyses show that overall crime rates in our largest cities were nearly identical last year as to previous years. Leading research shows there's no empirical evidence to back his claims. The comments also ignore the dedication and call to serve that most officers have, and they distract from important conversations our country needs to have about reform that aims to truly bring down both crime and unnecessary incarceration."

**Serpas** has over 30 years of experience in law enforcement, having led both the Nashville and New Orleans Police departments, as well as the Washington State Patrol. He is the chairman of the national group Law Enforcement Leaders, which represents top police chiefs and prosecutors from all fifty states. He has provided expert commentary on criminal justice reform for the New York Times, Washington Post, The Hill, NPR, and MSNBC, among other outlets.

**To schedule an interview with Serpas or learn more about Law Enforcement Leaders, please contact Fiona Druge at [Fiona.Druge@berlinrosen.com](mailto:Fiona.Druge@berlinrosen.com) or (646) 755-6126.**

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**About Law Enforcement Leaders**

Law Enforcement Leaders unites more than 165 current and former police chiefs, sheriffs, federal and state prosecutors, and attorneys general from all 50 states to urge for a reduction in both crime and incarceration. We believe that the country can reduce incarceration while keeping down crime, and we support changes to our criminal justice system to achieve that goal. See a full list of members [here](#).