

National Law Enforcement Summit on Crime

On October 18th, Law Enforcement Leaders hosted the [National Law Enforcement Summit on Crime in 2017](#) — bringing together the nation's leading police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and attorneys general from across the country at the National Press Club in Washington D.C.

While crime remains at historic lows, the United States is facing new public safety threats, such as an increase in opioid overdoses and murder in some cities. At the Summit, law enforcement gathered to raise their critical voice to inform the best policy responses to these challenges.



Police Leaders: Focus Limited Resources to Fight Violent Crime and Reduce Unnecessary Incarceration

At the Summit, police chiefs, sheriffs, and leaders of national police associations joined CNN's **Jake Tapper** for [a conversation](#) on public safety challenges and their innovative strategies to fight violent crime, while reducing unnecessary arrests and incarceration.

The impressive panel included Houston Police Chief **Art Acevedo**, Detroit Police Chief **James Craig**, District of Columbia Police Chief **Peter Newsham**, San Francisco Police Chief **Bill Scott**, Major Cities Chiefs Association Executive Director and former Police Chief **Darrel Stephens**, Vice President for Homeland Security of Major Counties Sheriffs Association and Hennepin County Sheriff **Richard Stanek**, and Law Enforcement Leaders Founding Chairman **Ronal Serpas**.

The police leaders shared their local solutions to nationwide crime concerns. Despite their different strategies, the panelists agreed: we must implement effective policies to keep the streets safe — and stop the revolving doors of recidivism. **Scott** discussed the need to resist policies of the past that don't work when a city's crime rate ticks up. Other panelists highlighted that despite recent local reforms, we need to continue to evolve as a country in terms of how we use incarceration.

"Our jails should never be used as warehouses for the mentally ill or the chemically addicted," **Sheriff Stanek** said. "Everybody on this panel before me has said it, and others after me will say it no doubt."



Prosecutors Panel: Find Effective Alternatives to Incarceration

Next, some of the nation's most distinguished [prosecutors](#) convened to discuss how to pursue cases without increasing unnecessary incarceration.

Speakers included **Michael Freeman**, President of the National District Attorney's Association and Hennepin County Attorney; **David LaBahn**, President and CEO of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys; **Cyrus Vance**, New York County District Attorney and Law Enforcement Leaders' Steering Committee member; and **Hal Hardin**, President of the National Association of Former U.S. Attorneys.

The undisputed theme of the discussion was that neither the offender nor the community is served when the punishment for a crime is not proportional to the offense committed. Instead, we can take steps to help victims and law enforcement, while offering offenders a path away from a life of crime. Diverting lower-level offenders away from incarceration can be done without sacrificing public safety.

LaBahn and **Hardin** both emphasized the importance of resource allocation within prosecutors' offices. **Freeman** also discussed transparency as a key component of data and fact driven decisions.

Watch video of remarks and panel conversations from the Summit [here](#).

Click [here](#) to see Summit photos.

The Summit In the News



Law enforcement stressed "bipartisan political support in their groups for the measures proposed, and for not going back to the 'overly punitive' approaches launched in the crack-drenched years of the 1980s and 1990s," writes [The Washington Post's](#) Tom Jackman.



Police officials said "a return to community policing has been crucial in lowering crime, and they urged Mr. Sessions to take into account the significance it has had," writes Maggie Haberman in [The New York Times](#).



"[Law Enforcement Leaders] called for a raft of changes, including the passage of a sentencing reform bill backed by a bipartisan pair of senators," writes Eli Watkins for [CNN](#).



[The Guardian's](#) Sabrina Siddiqui wrote that the event showcased bipartisan support for reform, adding that Congress has "similarly forged rare collaborations on legislation that would lower mandatory minimums for low-level drug crimes, promote community policing and target recidivism by investing in education and re-entry programs for former offenders."

Read more coverage [here](#).



Law Enforcement Leaders Urge President, Attorney General to Join Bipartisan Movement for Reform

Learning from mistakes of the past and inclusively adjusting practices toward better and sustainable outcomes were emphasized by the keynote speakers at the Summit, including **Mark Holden**, Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Koch Industries Inc., and **Eric Holder**, former U.S. Attorney General.

Law enforcement professionals are a key voice in making sure smart policies are implemented to better protect future generations. "Criminal justice is one issue that unites everyone across the political spectrum and the nation," said **Holden**.

Attorney General Holder agreed, and emphasized that expressions of support are not enough. Now is the time for long overdue legislative action. He applauded the bipartisan effort of Law Enforcement Leaders in raising the voice of police and prosecutors in conversations on crime policy. He assured the group: the country "must hear from your organization."



Law Enforcement Leaders sent [a letter](#) to President Trump and Attorney General Sessions requesting that they join the bipartisan movement for criminal justice reform that will strengthen the justice system, aid law enforcement, and better protect Americans. The letter also encouraged them to take up the group's [policy recommendations](#), including focusing resources on violent crime and championing the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017.

"As law enforcement professionals, of course we are grateful that the President has been steadfast in his support of law enforcement," said **Chairman Serpas**. "Now, we would like to participate in the debate of what the future of law enforcement will be in this nation."

LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS

To Reduce Crime & Incarceration



Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration unites more than 200 current and former police chiefs, federal and state chief prosecutors, and attorneys general from all 50 states to urge for a reduction in both crime and incarceration.

- For media inquiries contact media@lawenforcementleaders.org.
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