



# LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS

To Reduce Crime & Incarceration



## Law Enforcement Leaders Becomes Pivotal Voice on Capitol Hill

The Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee in February with bipartisan backing from lawmakers. The bill gives judges more discretion during sentencing, reduces some mandatory minimums for nonviolent offenses, and more. The morning of the hearing, Judiciary Chairman Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) issued a **press release** about **a letter** from Law Enforcement Leaders Co-Chairman **Ronal Serpas**. He also quoted it in his **opening statement** before the Committee's vote. In the letter, Serpas noted: "I believe this legislation would free funding and time for officers to focus on targeting and preventing violent crime, making our streets safer. Broadly, law enforcement supports similar reforms." He cited support for the bill from 68 group members.

Moreover, 39 Law Enforcement Leaders members signed a **letter** to Sens. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) in support of the Pretrial Integrity and Safety Act of 2017. This bill would offer states the resources necessary to reform the practice of money bail,

which allows defenders who can afford it to be released while others who can't remain behind bars — too often for nonviolent offenses. Former Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, **Ron Davis**, penned an **op-ed** supporting the federal effort. Former U.S. Attorney of Kansas, **Barry Grissom**, wrote in the ***Kansas City Star*** applauding the bipartisan bill.

Read more about other Law Enforcement Leader's national efforts in ***The Atlantic***, ***The Hill***, ***Houston Chronicle***, ***McClatchy***, ***New York Times***, ***NPR***, and ***Washington Examiner***.

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## **Group Backs Sensible Solutions to Opioid Crisis**

President Trump visited New Hampshire to unveil his **plan** to tackle the opioid crisis. Members praised the president's recognition of the severity of the problem, but **said** from their experience treatment-based approaches should be implemented rather than policies that lead to additional incarceration.

**John Tharp**, Sheriff of Lucas County, Ohio, called the drug problem a “public health crisis.” He added: “Federal resources are limited, but should be focused on providing treatment to people facing addiction — and letting law enforcement spend their limited time elsewhere, fighting violent crimes.”

The administration also recently changed marijuana enforcement tactics, with Attorney

General Sessions reversing Justice Department policy that let federal prosecutors overlook nonviolent marijuana offenses where state law allowed. Former Bush-appointed U.S. Attorney for Utah and LEL Steering Committee member **Brett Tolman** called the **decision** “an ineffective way to reduce crime.”

Read more in [\*USA TODAY\*](#).

At the local level, Milwaukee Police Chief **Ed Flynn** created a **task force** to investigate fatal overdoses in the city. Middlesex, Mass. Sheriff **Peter Koutoujian** has been **collaborating** with sheriffs and jail administrators to implement MATADOR, a program that helps jail inmates recover from opioid addiction. Near the nation’s capital, **Bryan Porter**, Commonwealth’s Attorney for the City of Alexandria, Va., is leading an **effort** to create a drug court program this year for treatment.

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## Members Make a Difference In Their Jurisdictions

This quarter, members have also worked to advance Law Enforcement Leaders’ mission in their localities across the country:

- In California, Association of Prosecuting Attorneys President **David LaBahn** published an op-ed in the [\*Sacramento Bee\*](#) supporting the California Money Bail Reform Act, which would base pretrial detention on assessment of public safety risk instead of on ability to pay cash bail. San Francisco District Attorney **George Gascón** **applied** new marijuana legalization laws to prior offenses, expunging or reducing past charges.
- Norman City Police Chief **Keith Humphrey** wrote in [\*The Oklahoman\*](#) in support of a package of sentencing reform bills, which would reduce sentences for nonviolent crimes and improve parole practices. Tulsa Police Chief **Chuck Jordan** **joined forces** with Mayor G.T. Bynum to form a Citizen Advisory Board for the department. The initiative will improve communication between the police and local residents. The Mayor added: “Tulsa is setting the standard across the nation when it comes to implementing a comprehensive community policing strategy, and I am thankful for these citizens who have stepped forward to offer their help.”
- Oregon District Attorney **Rod Underhill** **made** possessing small amounts of drugs a misdemeanor, while Oregon County Attorney **John Hummel** **launched** an initiative to place drug offenders in treatment rather than prison. San Antonio Police Chief **William McManus** **issued** a policy allowing officers to avoid arrests for minor drug crimes.

- Law Enforcement Leaders **congratulates** group member and former U.S. Attorney for Alabama, **Doug Jones**, on his new position as U.S. Senator from Alabama.
- The Middlesex, Mass. Sheriff **Peter Koutoujian supported** legislation to expand medical parole, which passed the House and the Senate. He also **urged** the state to reform its bail system.

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Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration unites more than 175 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. With this group, law enforcement joins the emerging movement calling for an end to unnecessary, widespread incarceration.

- For media inquiries contact [media@lawenforcementleaders.org](mailto:media@lawenforcementleaders.org)
- For all other inquiries, please contact [info@lawenforcementleaders.org](mailto:info@lawenforcementleaders.org)
- To become a Law Enforcement Leaders member, contact us [here](#).



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