



For Immediate Release:  
February 10, 2015

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## **PORAC Participates in Hearing to Strengthen Community Trust in Law Enforcement**

**Sacramento, CA:** The Legislature today held an important in-depth discussion on the relationship between law enforcement and the communities we serve. As the largest statewide association of public safety personnel in the nation, the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) attended the hearing to listen and contribute to the discussion. PORAC wants to be part of the solution.

“I understand completely the trust that is placed in an individual who carries a badge,” said PORAC President Mike Durant. “The authority to assist in times of duress, and the power to arrest during moments of conflict, can be found at the core of a safe and trusting society. This trust cannot just be given; it must be earned and reinforced every time we meet with members of our community.”

The panel discussion involving President Durant and PORAC Legal Defense Fund Administrator Edward Fishman examined investigating and prosecuting allegations of officer misconduct. Representing 67,000 public safety members and 915 associations, PORAC members provide a critical perspective to this dialogue.

“It can be argued that peace officers in California are the best educated and trained in the country. It can also be argued that while our job is rewarding, the challenges can also be extremely dangerous.

“PORAC strongly believes that law enforcement must subscribe to three basic principles in the performance of public safety responsibilities. The public deserves: transparency in how we do our job that is open to review; accountability to ensure no one is above the law, including those who enforce it; and accessibility of the public to ask questions that public safety officials need to answer in a forthright manner that engenders the public trust.”

Members of both Senate and Assembly Public Safety Committees oversaw the hearing, which included speakers from the Department of Justice, research groups, various community organizations and local law enforcement agencies.

“It is our job to discuss serious issues of concern with openness and honesty. PORAC is willing to continue participating in these discussions. We want the community to know we care and while we represent officers who do a very difficult job under dangerous conditions, we also recognize that we benefit from listening to members of the community and their concerns.

*The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) was incorporated in 1953 as a professional federation of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Today, PORAC represents over 67,000 public safety members and over 915 associations, making it the largest law enforcement organization in California and the largest statewide association in the nation.*

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