



*April 22, 2019*

Dear California,

When it comes to protecting our communities, we have an opportunity, and more importantly, a moral responsibility to chart a new path forward. An officer's use of force impacts Californians throughout the state and Americans throughout the country – it is arguably the most important and serious issue under consideration by California's legislature. It impacts families who have lost loved ones, communities who feel unrest and the officers who put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe.

This issue has plagued our nation for decades. In the search for answers, the national dialogue too often turns to misinformation and divisive rhetoric that reinforce deeply-held beliefs – beliefs that transcend law enforcement and the communities they have sworn to protect. But misinformation and division have not led to progress. At a time when America is so deeply divided that progress appears out of the question, Californians must come together and rise above.

Today, we're advocating for a reset.

To every family grieving from loss, you are not alone.

To our state's elected leaders, this issue is too important to put on hold until next year.

To California law enforcement officers, stand tall.

To every Californian, we assure you that this issue impacts us all – we need to lead together.

We need to do everything in our power to minimize the use of force. To make real progress and enact lasting change, we must work together. We must replace fear and anger with empathy and understanding. We must make a genuine effort to understand what it is like to walk in each other's shoes. We must seek counsel from those whose backgrounds, beliefs and experiences are different from our own.

Our democracy hinges on the notion that people can come together, that we can engage in informed discussion, and from that discussion will come some level of common wisdom that will foster a better future. It's an aspirational vision that is within reach.

As leaders in California law enforcement, we have been and remain committed to working with as many Californians as possible. We've spent the last year listening to and collecting input from our neighbors,

including legislators, the American Civil Liberties Union, our Attorney General, experts and impacted stakeholders from around the state. We surveyed all of the proven best practices from around the country. And, we incorporated everything we heard and everything we learned into the newly amended SB 230 – California’s use of force bill that will set a national precedent by requiring consistent policies and mandatory training standards for all 500 California law enforcement agencies. SB 230 will go further than any other bill ever to minimize the use of force in our communities.

The country is watching – they are calling for leadership on this issue. By enacting this sweeping reform to California’s use of force policies, we can lead the nation through legislation that includes and reflects all the diverse voices who make-up our state and each and every life impacted by this issue. This critical objective is achievable, but it requires a commitment to collaboration.

Assemblymember Shirley Weber and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) are important voices on this issue. While we have put forward legislation that will set a new national precedent on use of force, we want to work closely with Dr. Weber and the ACLU to deliver a solution that we can all champion proudly. Navigating the complexities of an issue that touches every Californian in one way or another can be challenging, but the result of collaboration will shape the future for our families, officers and communities.

We have the opportunity and obligation to come together, to lead and to get this right.

Sincerely,



**Brian R. Marvel**  
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**Rick Labeske**  
President  
California Association of Highway Patrolmen



**Ronald A. Lawrence**  
President  
California Police Chiefs Association