



January 25, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

I hope that you, your family, and all those in your administration are safe and healthy. I thank you and Vice President Kamala Harris for your service to our country and for your leadership in the past year, and look forward to what's to come in the new year.

I write to you today on behalf of the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC), representing 75,000 public safety members and 930 public safety associations. PORAC was founded in 1953 as a professional federation of state, local, and federal law enforcement associations, and is now the largest such statewide organization in the United States. We have been a longtime leader in collaborative community policing and on the subject of police conduct and reform since its inception. In 1959, just six years after its founding, PORAC became the first association to develop a "peace officers standard setting agency," now known as Peace Officers Standards and Testing (POST). The rest of the nation soon followed, and POST is now a foundational part of law enforcement in the United States. As our nation continues the necessary conversation on law enforcement policies and practices today, PORAC has remained dedicated with our nation-leading advocacy.

I write because our organization has recently been made aware of reports citing a pending police reform Executive Order. While we are pleased to hear that valuable reforms are being considered, we believe the best way to approach reforms to policing is on a bipartisan basis, through congressional action. While we understand the Executive Order has yet to be released, we strongly maintain that any action on this issue should not jeopardize federal funding for state and local law enforcement agencies. This funding is critical to agencies' ability to provide adequate training, support, and resources to protect our communities while also cultivating a more positive and collaborative relationship with our community members. We, at PORAC, value the safety and wellness of both our communities and law enforcement officers, and have shared our policy priorities below:

1. As stated above, it is vital that state and local law enforcement officers are able to receive adequate federal funding, without onerous preconditions, in order to implement wide-reaching change. Our nation's law enforcement needs to be well supported in order to carry out the core responsibility of protecting our communities.
2. Federal standards for use of force, training, and recruitment should be implemented. However, the enactment of eliminating qualified immunity will remove long-standing officer protections. Law enforcement officers remain at risk daily and their safety and rights should be safeguarded.

Brian R. Marvel
President

Damon Kurtz
Vice President

Shawn Welch
Treasurer

Randy Beintema
Secretary



3. The establishment and/or increased funding for programs that partner law enforcement officers with mental health and social work professionals is critical to reducing the likelihood of an encounter escalating to violence.
4. First responders, who may have come from military or other positions, will face fully-earned Social Security from previous jobs being cut back when they retire. Repealing the GPO/WEP would have an immense impact on preserving their retirement security.
5. Law enforcement officers exhaust themselves protecting our communities and they should have access to affordable and reliable health care when their service ends. Lowering the Medicare enrollment age will increase eligibility to first responders who are forced to retire early.
6. Synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl, have become the most common cause of overdose deaths in the United States. State and local law enforcement need the resources, such as more advanced screening equipment, to identify and fight the harmful dispersion of these drugs.

For further detail on PORAC's work and priorities, please refer to our attached policy platform which outlines our vision for police reform in California and nationwide.

As your Administration continues to engage on police reform issues, we encourage continued collaboration with Vice President Harris, who worked alongside PORAC for years as California's former Attorney General. We strongly believe that our organization can be a valuable resource to you and Vice President Harris moving forward. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the PORAC Headquarters (916) 928-3777 or contact our legislative advocates at Steptoe & Johnson LLP (202) 429-6457.

Very Truly Yours,
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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