

WEST COAST COALITION



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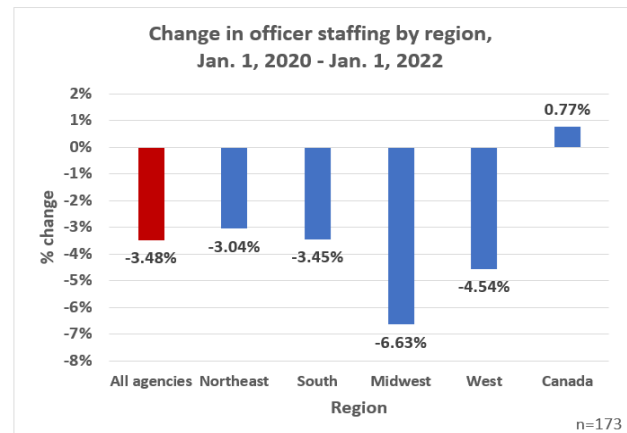
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Newly Formed Law Enforcement West Coast Coalition Heads to D.C.

Coalition Representing Officers from California, Washington, Oregon & Hawaii Advocate for Increased Funding to Support Recruitment & Retention Amidst Record Low Police Staffing Shortages

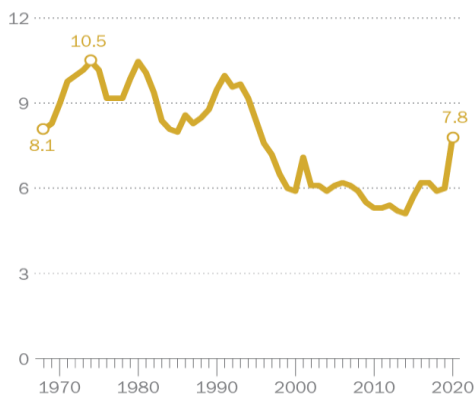
Washington, D.C. – In response to [record low staffing levels amongst police departments nationwide](#), hampering the ability of local law enforcement to both respond to and proactively address [rising crime in their communities](#) – leaders from the four statewide organizations representing the West Coast’s rank-and-file established this Coalition to advocate for new laws, policies and programs to support recruitment and retention. The Coalition will be in D.C. from Monday, April 17 through Thursday, April 20 meeting with elected officials and staff as well as representatives from the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office to advance their shared vision for the future of law enforcement.

“Police reform and public safety are not synonymous, but nor are they mutually exclusive,” said **Brian Marvel, President of the [Peace Officers Research Association of California \(PORAC\)](#)**. “The profession must change to meet the challenges presented by the increased expectations and evolving cultural mores of today. And that starts with ensuring that local police departments are fully funded so they can recruit, hire, train and retain the right officers for the job.”



U.S. murder rate rose sharply in 2020, but remains below previous highs

Murders per 100,000 people in the U.S.



Note: 2020 data is provisional.
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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(Source: Police Executive Research Forum)

“Police staffing shortages and crime go hand in hand,” said **Christopher Tracy, President of the [Washington Council of Police & Sheriffs \(WACOPS\)](#)**. “Our members have made great strides in improving transparency, accountability and training to increase the efficacy of police-community interactions, but it is hard to put those into practice when departments are struggling just to keep enough officers on staff to maintain public safety.”

“If we really want to make a difference in people’s lives, if we are serious about improving public safety outcomes for Americans, we need to boost officer morale, help the public better understand police work, and hire more officers,” said **Aaron Schmutz, President of the [Oregon Coalition of Police & Sheriffs \(ORCOPS\)](#)**.

The West Coast Coalition will be advocating for several bills and advising on how to maximize support for local departments and officers, including:

- [*Invest to Protect Act \(S. 1144\)*](#) – Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA) – Will make critical, targeted investments in small and midsize police departments — which make up more than 96% of local U.S. police departments — for the recruitment, retention, support, and training they need to protect themselves and our communities.
- [*Providing Child Care for Police Officers Act*](#) – Rep. Scott Peters (D-CA-50) – Would authorize a pilot program to provide grants to local governments across California to partner with law enforcement agencies to open much needed childcare centers for peace officers and department employees.
- [*Social Security Fairness Act \(H.R. 82, S. 597\)*](#) – Reps. Garret Graves (R-LA-6) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-7), and Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME) – Aims to eliminate the reduction of benefits of those who receive a pension. If passed, the bill would provide full Social Security benefits to those affected.

“Recruiting and retaining officers is about empathy and resources,” **said Robert Cavaco, President of the [State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers \(SHOPO\)](#)**. “It’s about empathizing with the men and women who risk their lives every day because public service is their calling. And it’s about providing those men and women with the resources and support they need to do their jobs effectively. We need to tackle this staffing problem from both ends, at the hiring phase, but also staving off resignations so we can keep that institutional knowledge and mentorship for younger officers. Everything else flows from there.”

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