

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2018

DE-ESCALATE WASHINGTON
Building bridges between communities and police



#Justiceforjackie



JOINT STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PUBLIC SAFETY REFORM

The coalition of law enforcement and community groups is united in our support of the legislature's 2018 passage of historic public safety bills amending law enforcement mandatory training and Washington's deadly use of force standard.

Our unique partnership of community and law enforcement is more than symbolic; it provides a clear path forward to work together to implement critical policies on training and accountability, and to improve community trust. We understand there are concerns about the process by which I-940 and ESHB 3003 were enacted. While we continue to believe that the Legislature's actions were constitutional and appropriate, we are committed to the substance of our agreement. We stand unified to support this effort, including working with the Legislature to finish any work that may be necessary to strengthen and clarify the language of I-940. This effort, and the sensible reform that resulted from it, has created lasting and tangible policies that have increased trust and created better relationships. We are confident in the change to come.

The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) has begun its outreach to implement de-escalation and mental health training curriculum. As the CJTC focuses on best practices for its training and works with law enforcement and the community to tackle implicit bias, we expect the partnership between law enforcement and the community will enhance our practical and constructive dialogue about our common interests.

Delivering Initiative 940 to the state legislature provided the opportunity to address long-standing issues that had divided communities and law enforcement. The legislature responded and invited law enforcement leadership and De-Escalate Washington to sit down together for the specific purpose of finding common ground. It involved sharing perspectives, listening, and respecting points of view. The goal was to put an end to the divisive and damaging disputes, and focus on areas of agreement. The result was consensus on the policy, reflected in ESHB 3003, to strengthen and clarify the language of I-940.

The reforms are about public safety and the aim is to reduce violent interactions and increase trust between community and law enforcement by:

- providing improved de-escalation, mental health, and first aid training,
- ensuring independent investigations of deadly use of force,
- respecting tribal communities,
- defining a good faith standard for use of deadly force, and
- reimbursing officers for defense costs when found not guilty or charges are dismissed

De-Escalate Washington, along with the state's major law enforcement labor groups and the association for all 39 elected Sheriffs and over 230 Police chiefs across the state, strongly support these reforms and remain committed to supporting the law.

##

COALITION MEMBER STATEMENTS

"Persons with disabilities are sadly in the forefront for fatal encounters with police. We believe that the new law on deadly force and the emphasis on training for mental health skills is enormous progress. Our partnership with law enforcement is essential to moving forward on this issue."

Kim Mosolf, Attorney with Disability Rights Washington

"We agree the momentum of I-940 was crucial to bring us together. The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs will continue to advocate for the consensus amendments in ESHB 3003 to become law at the end of whatever occurs in the ongoing court process. We remain committed to working together because it is the right thing to do for our communities and to support law enforcement."

Steve Strachan, Executive Director, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

“ERW advocated for I-940 and the consensus legislation because it is good policy that embraces best practices for public safety reform. We know this will save lives. The consensus process reflects the values of ERW by collectively recognizing the humanity of all those impacted -- to gain a better understanding of our challenges, and more importantly to develop real, sustainable solutions. It was not an easy path, but a worthwhile one, and we stand by the initiative and ESHB 3003.”

Monisha Harrell, Board Chair, Equal Rights Washington

“The Washington State Fraternal Order of Police is 100% committed to the language established through our joint efforts to create ESHB 3003. During a time where there was palpable tension between the citizens and Law Enforcement, we showed the community the best of what Washington could achieve by working together and listening to each other. These efforts were critical to building bridges and moving forward for the best interest for all of us”

Marco Monteblanco, President, Washington State Fraternal Order of Police

“We want to make very clear that we remain firmly committed to the language of ESHB 3003 and to maintaining and continuing the positive dialogue we have developed with law enforcement, no matter what the Court decides. We stand behind the solid policies of I-940 and the consensus agreement of ESHB 3003.”

Andre Taylor, Co-Founder of Not This Time

“WACOPS supports the policy language in ESHB 3003 and appreciates the commitment and cooperation of the coalition. We remain confident the language in this law will improve public safety in our communities, and the safety of our peace officers that protect and serve.”

Craig Bulkley, President, Washington Council of Police & Sheriffs

“These relationships between the community and law enforcement are so valuable. We cannot afford to distrust one another. Honestly, our lives depend on re-establishing that trust.”

Lisa Earl, mother of Jacqueline Salyers and founder of Justice for Jackie

“We look forward to the positive impact these reforms will have for Latinos across the State. The Latino community continues to have a growing presence in Washington and it is essential we have strong relationships with law enforcement.”

Nina Martinez, Board Chair of Latino Civic Alliance

MEDIA CONTACT:

Barbara Smith

barbara@greatworkcommunications.com

(206) 605-3392

Leslie Cushman

De-Escalate Washington

Leslie.cushman.olympia@gmail.com

360.280.0087