



Washington Association of  
**SHERIFFS &  
POLICE CHIEFS**

3060 Willamette Drive NE  
Lacey, WA 98516  
360-486-2380 (Phone)  
360-486-2381 (Fax)  
www.waspc.org

FOR RELEASE  
January 21, 2022

Statement attribution:  
Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director

**WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS  
STATEMENT ON ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION**

(Lacey, WA) --- The opinion issued by the Office of Attorney General reflects the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs' (WASPC) position that the reform laws enacted in 2021 need improvement and clarification. Specifically, we emphasize the portion of the summary of the opinion that states:

*We begin by emphasizing that the answers to all of your questions are extremely difficult. Reasonable minds disagree about the correct legal conclusions.*

*We give our best legal answers for them here, but must acknowledge that these answers are debatable and uncertain. In light of this uncertainty, for the following reasons we strongly urge the Legislature to clarify its intent regarding these important questions.*

*First, these bills address profoundly important topics regarding policing, and issues that can literally constitute matters of life and death. Consequently, legislative clarity in this area is especially important. Indeed, the Washington State Supreme Court emphasizes that uncertainty in the law around policing harms "both effective police enforcement and also protection of individual rights."*

We continue to urge our legislators to provide for clarity and balanced reform. The legislature cannot take its eye off the ball to help victims find justice, and to ensure communities can expect the police to have the authority to detain suspects who pose a danger to the community.

Throughout this 2022 session, WASPC will work for nonpartisan, constructive reform and measures to improve the public trust that protects victims. WASPC's summary of its legislative agenda for 2022 can be found [here](#).

###