



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

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

February 27, 2020

Greetings from your Executive Director:

The legislative session is moving toward the homestretch and our Policy Director, James McMahan, is seeing the schedule accelerate dramatically. The other day I called him in the afternoon and he said he had twelve (!) separate hearings on which WASPC was testifying just that day-- by the way much appreciation to all of the Sheriffs and Chiefs who assist James and all of us with testimony and support-- it means lot to us and to the profession!

This week, there was a hearing on what is called the **Open Courts bill**, Sheriff Pastor testified on this bill which would create a state law that would require monitoring of all federal and state (not local) law enforcement officers while in a courthouse, and that no civil arrests or service may be made within a mile of a courthouse. This proposal is aimed at curbing ICE enforcement of civil immigration, and is part of the divisive and polarizing debate over immigration and the federal/state conflict on this issue. In all of this, we are asked to enforce the law and provide public safety for all of our residents.

Pierce County Sheriff Pastor testified about the divided political atmosphere, the unintended consequences, and the role of law enforcement and our executives in his testimony opposing the bill- I have attached them [here](#) with his permission.

Speaking of immigration, be aware that nationally ICE has been serving subpoenas on some local police departments and Sheriffs Offices for information. Here is a [press release](#) from Oregon regarding a subpoena served on the Washington County, Oregon Sheriff's Office, as well as a news article on one in San Diego. We have no information or indication that this will occur in our state, but you may want to make your counsel aware.

Last week, we held a press conference in downtown Seattle to press for the legislature to place any **money saved from prospective cuts to the Dept. of Corrections and post-prison supervision** directly into a dedicated account (like the Criminal Justice Treatment Account) to be used for treatment and re-entry. This is perfectly matched with our previously adopted "Principles for Community Trust" that says:

Reform in the criminal justice system should be based on public safety outcomes and should not ignore concern for law enforcement, victims of crime, and justice. Assisting offenders with re-entry and reducing recidivism is good for public safety. Achievement of these goals are worth our state's investment of time, money, and resources.

In other words, don't just talk the "reform" talk, walk the walk. Public safety means make sure we improve re-entry and reduce recidivism. The legislature has resisted creating the dedicated account, and we will continue to push for this. Here is a [link](#) to the story.

This week, during testimony in Olympia on a bill related to opioids, James sent this moving [testimony](#) from a former addict whose life was forever improved and changed by the actions of one law enforcement officer.

A little-noticed provision of the budget process going on now is that the President's budget has proposed an **easing of restrictions on Medicaid funding for institutional care for mental illness**. This is a significant step that may reduce the number of people with untreated mental illness ending up in our jails. Because it involves politics and the President, you probably have not heard about it because it doesn't lead to "clicks" - however you will note in the [article](#) from the Wall Street Journal that it is sponsored by a Democratic Congress member, in the President's budget, and has bipartisan support. Hopefully it won't get lost in the shuffle.

When our crime statistics go out each year, we send a press release highlighting trends and pointing out that individual agencies and data are all available at our website, directly from a reliable source. Despite this, every year some for-profit companies (like security system manufacturers) trying to get some attention and sell their products always send out **press releases like "This state's most dangerous cities!"** to create fear and sell their stuff. A few papers always reprint their misleading data. Port Angeles Chief Brian Smith pushed back hard in the [local paper](#) when this occurred- very well done and a great message!

Finally, this was sent out to several law enforcement agencies earlier this week and I am sharing with you- regarding a new exemption for law enforcement for tolling facilities--

Effective August 1, 2019, the Washington State Transportation Commission approved new toll exemptions to include all WA state tolling facilities, including SR 99 Tunnel, Tacoma Narrows Bridge, SR 520 Bridge, I-405 Express Toll Lanes, and SR 167 HOT Lanes. All emergency vehicles equipped with lights and sirens are now exempt from paying tolls. Headquarters has been working with DOT in an attempt to automatically feed our emergency vehicle information directly from fleet into their system. Currently their system is dependent on Good to Go passes and we were not able to find a workable solution to automate the toll exemptions.

To apply for the toll exemptions, DOT will need some information from you regarding your vehicles. Please fill out the attached forms, 2019 New Toll Exempt Eligible Vehicles and Eligible Exempt Vehicles List, and return them to DOT at goodtogotolling@wsdot.wa.gov.

There are two additional requirements to receive the toll exemption:

If you do not have a Good To Go! account, you will need to open one at My Good To Go.com

a) Add your eligible exempt vehicles only to the new account (if you will be opening a new account)

b) Purchase a pass to be installed in each vehicle (if you don't have a pass installed already

i. Most choose a sticker pass for their vehicles

ii. Passes are required for each vehicle as that is where we apply the toll exemptions so that the tolling system will know that the vehicle is exempt from tolling.

Once you have opened an account, purchased passes, and installed them, you can revise the vehicle list to add the pass number that is installed for each license plate. You will want to keep a copy of the spreadsheet for your records. Please send the revised spreadsheet to goodtogotolling@wsdot.wa.gov so that we can have the exemption added to each of your passes.

If you know of anyone else who has vehicles that are eligible for toll exemption, please feel free to share this information with them.

Should you have any questions, you may contact Maria Flesher at 206-440-5153 or Bobbie Jean Stanley at 206-440-5154 or by email at goodtogotolling@wsdot.wa.gov.

Have a good week-

Work Hard- Have Fun- Stay Safe

Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director
Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs
3060 Willamette Drive NE
Lacey, WA 98516
steve@waspc.org
360-486-2380