



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

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Greetings from your Executive Director:

Here are a few updates for you this week—

As this newsletter goes out, Seattle Chief Carmen Best has announced her retirement after the City Council voted to slash the police department's budget. Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best's retirement will be a loss to her community and to law enforcement leadership in the northwest. Chief Best brought service, selflessness, giving, and devotion to her service to law enforcement. Her mentorship and leadership helped her guide SPD through this difficult time. She stood up for her officers and the community they protect. Chief Adrian Diaz has been named Interim Chief. We wish him all the best during this time of transition.

The [New York Times](#) (!) did an excellent piece this week on the **neighborhood and business owners affected** by the “defunding” debate and decisions in Seattle, and it offers a perspective we have not heard much about. [Here](#) is a worthwhile commentary about the inconsistencies of the Seattle City Council's approach. Also, [here](#) is a story that is worth seeing about a business leaving downtown Seattle.

Law enforcement agencies are accountable locally, to elected council members and Mayors, and Sheriffs are directly elected by the people. The community in Seattle itself, and in communities around our state continue to express themselves about this issue, and decisions will ultimately be made locally. It is important also to remember that we have recommended thoughtful [reforms](#), many of you as Sheriffs and Chiefs have been having these conversations all along, and that local communications is the key. Slashing budgets with no attention to outcomes is not the correct approach. Most of our communities see that clearly.

Meanwhile, as we mentioned last week, polling clearly shows that **most Americans support these thoughtful approaches** but not slashing budgets with no plan. In addition, while there is always a focus on conflict, outrage, fear and whatever is sensational today, here are some interesting polling data from [Gallup](#) this week.

The CDC has just posted a “**correctional toolkit**” on its **COVID-19** website. Most of the items are existing components which everyone has already seen. But there are 2 new sections (FAQs for Corrections and FAQs for LE). The rest of the toolkit is a good cross reference to relevant existing materials in non-correctional parts of the website. [This](#) is the link. [John McGrath](#), our WASPC Jail Liaison and [Dr. Marc Stern](#) are available for assistance if you need it. The information will also be on our COVID resource area on our website.

As we move through **COVID, civil unrest and current and city and county budget tumult**, I did want to share some good articles, feedback and links for you that help to define and focus the issues. First, here is a to a [column](#) by Portland Chief Lovell about what's going on in his city,

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and a good article the Spokane [Spokesman-Review](#) did this week on new recruits at Spokane P.D. We have also provided a [link](#) to a good column in that paper by former U.S. Attorney James McDevitt.

Also, just a reminder that every day, PERF sends out very valuable information on current issues and we post those updates each day on our website.

Last year, when the legislature passed the bill creating the framework for a single-point firearms background system, to be developed within the State Patrol, the [bill](#) also created a **Firearms Background Board** (found in Section 2) to provide input for the system. The law requires a Sheriff and a Chief to be designated for the board. We recommend the person, who is appointed by the Governor. The Sheriffs have forwarded Okanogan County Sheriff Tony Hawley for this board, but **we also need a Police Chief**- if you are interested please let us know and we will get you the information. If you'd like to know more about the board and what they do, please contact Jamie Weimer at jweimer@waspc.org. Thanks!

Finally, we will continue to monitor whether there is any chance we can have an in-person **WASPC conference in November**, currently schedule for Skamania Lodge. Under existing conditions and existing retrictions, we could not, but we will keep an eye on that. However, in any case we are planning to provide some training and legislative updates, as we would at a conference, either in person or virtually. We are already working on speakers and sessions, so please mark your calendars with tentative training and conference topics for that week, Monday Nov. 16 to Thursday Nov. 19.

Thank you and stay safe!

Steve

Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director
Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs