

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

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STATEMENT BY BALTIMORE COUNTY POLICE CHIEF JIM JOHNSON, CHAIR, NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE, ON THE SHOOTING DEATHS OF SERVICE MEMBERS IN CHATTANOOGA, TN.

Members of the National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence (the Partnership) extend our deepest sympathy to the loved ones of the five service members killed by a gunman who went on a shooting rampage at two military facilities on Thursday in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

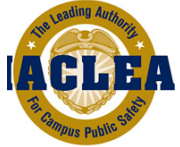
We mourn the losses of U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Carson A. Holmquist; U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Randall Smith; U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Thomas J. Sullivan; U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Squire K. "Skip" Wells; and U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. David A. Wyatt. We wish speedy recoveries to the Marine recruiter and Chattanooga police officer who were wounded in the attack. Our thoughts are with them, their loved ones and all those impacted by this heinous act.

While we do not yet know all the facts, we know this incident is being handled as a domestic terrorism investigation. News reports indicate the shooter had a history of substance abuse, a recent arrest, and that a background check revealed information disqualifying him for a position at a nuclear power plant. It has also been reported that he purchased firearms through an online site where buyers are able to avoid background checks because the sales are private, and that he was equipped with at least one assault rifle and 30-round ammunition magazines.

The problem of mass shooting incidents in the United States must be confronted, not ignored. A September 2014 FBI report found that active shooter incidents are on the rise. We have seen the targeting of those in uniform, from military professionals to law enforcement officers to TSA agents. We have also seen the targeting of members of the public, from those in houses of worship to shoppers in malls to moviegoers to small children in their classrooms. People everywhere are watching with horror as these incidents occur again and again.

As law enforcement professionals, we also see the gruesome gun deaths that occur every day in our communities. These killings often do not get significant media attention, but the losses are no less real to the families who will never again see their loved ones.

It is not enough to express shock and horror. It is imperative that our nation act to keep



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guns out of the hands of those who are too dangerous to possess them, and to address the problem of excessive firepower on our streets. A critical first step is to enforce the current federal ban on gun purchases by convicted felons and other dangerous persons. All of the organizations comprising the Partnership have long stressed the need for expanding background checks to cover all firearm sales. We know we cannot prevent every shooting incident from occurring, but that is no excuse for refusing to do what is possible. We certainly can prevent many needless tragedies and save countless lives.

Enough is enough. It is time to act responsibly and without delay. Lives depend on it.

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA)
Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA)
International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA)
International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)
National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)
Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)
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