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Contact: William Stander, (850) 212-3250, william@williamstander.com

The Florida Police Chiefs Association, Community Leaders Issue New Review of Policing Practices

Tallahassee, Fla. – The Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA) today released a new report from the association's Subcommittee on Accountability and Societal Change, established in the wake of the George Floyd murder to develop proposals that could be implemented at the local and state level to enhance trust, ensure transparency and accountability, and strengthen relationships between the police and the communities they serve.

FPCA president and Daytona Beach Shores Public Safety Department Director Stephan Dembinsky said, "On behalf of the board, I want to thank the Subcommittee members for their hard work and dedication. These are difficult issues, and sometimes difficult conversations, but the Subcommittee's work is an example that progress and success is possible – especially at the local level. The FPCA recommends that local law enforcement agencies and their communities use this document to engage or expand this conversation."

The full report may be viewed [here](#). Subcommittee members comment on their work in a video [here](#). A website with additional information is available [here](#).

In September, 2020 the Subcommittee, composed of 11 law enforcement executives and 11 community leaders from across Florida, issued its first report on use of force and

related issues. This report informed the development and passage of House Bill 7051, relating to law enforcement practices, that passed during the 2021 Florida Legislative Session.

The Subcommittee continued its work, focusing next on reviewing six main “pillars” from the 2015 Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, prepared by the federal Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, as the framework for this discussion. These pillars were:

- Building Trust & Legitimacy
- Policy & Oversight
- Technology & Social Media
- Community Policing & Crime Reduction
- Training & Education
- Officer Wellness & Safety

The FPCA’s Board of Directors approved this second report at their recent summer meeting. The report is comprehensive and speaks for itself, and builds on the 2015 federal report and House Bill 7051 by including numerous, specific action items. The report further prioritizes these action items within a framework of responsibility for law enforcement agencies or communities, or both, to provide a roadmap to implementing the broader recommendations and continue making progress together.

Said Dembinsky, "The law enforcement and community leaders on this Subcommittee, as well as FPCA membership, welcome reform measures that are factual and balanced, ever mindful of the dedication and sacrifice of law enforcement officers, but equally committed to public safety and accountability."

What Subcommittee Members Are Saying:

Subcommittee Chair Chief Anthony Holloway, St. Petersburg Police Department: “This Subcommittee has produced reports and provided guidance that are applicable to agencies of all sizes and demographics. By working together, utilizing these guidelines, we will be acting as one agency with one voice.”

Dr. Randy Nelson, Program Director, Bethune-Cookman University Center for Law and Social Justice: “Law enforcement needs to be able to engage our black and brown communities on non-law enforcement issues. If they don’t, we will never get over the stigma of these communities associating the police with negative actions. Communities

and the police have equal responsibility for this engagement. Only then can lasting partnerships that improve public safety be developed.”

Chief Jeffrey Pearson, Satellite Beach Police Department, FPCA Immediate Past President: “I was impressed by the willingness of all the Subcommittee members to have difficult conversations with each other to identify and address issues impacting the trust in law enforcement. It is the trust between law enforcement and the communities that they serve that is the single most important factor in effective policing and public safety strategies.”

Kareem J. Spratling, Shareholder, Bryant Miller Olive P.A.: “After reading these reports by the Subcommittee, I hope that law enforcement leaders will first understand that reform and supporting the police aren’t mutually exclusive. Any organization that doesn’t constantly evolve to support the people you serve, is one that is destined to fail. Reform is necessary. I hope officers and law enforcement leaders will accept these recommendations knowing that the people on this committee absolutely support them and understand that policing is one of the most difficult jobs in the world. Communities need to review these recommendations and acknowledge that most officers are good and want to do the right thing. They need to be just as likely to uplift them as they are to disparage them.”

Major David De La Espriella, Miami Beach Police Department and President, Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police: “My experience throughout this process was always positive. This committee was different than others that I have served on because the community members were such an integral part of the conversation. The product shows how engaged they were. I look forward to taking the reports back to my region and helping to continue the dialog. I encourage everyone to continue to build this bridge between the police and the community – the work on this relationship is never really done.”

Chief Terri Brown, Florida State University Police Department: “My hope is that law enforcement leaders will read these reports and realize there is always room for improvement. Closing the disconnect between police and the community requires involving the community from the start.”

Paula Hoisington, Chair, Central Florida Urban League: “This report is a beginning to building that bridge of openness and transparency, to build the bridge of unity so that

both sides can work together to build bigger, stronger, safer communities. Working together with one common goal, to make the communities safer.”

Chief Cecil Smith, Sanford Police Department: “We had in-depth conversations about what law enforcement and communities should be doing to make communities safer. It was always enlightening to listen to our stake holders describe what they feel the police should be doing and how they should be doing it. I was looking to see how I could modify my agency to fit within the recommendations we collectively made.”

Chief Dan Slaughter, Clearwater Police Department: “This document should be used as a roadmap to stimulate conversation. We all want the same thing, we want our communities to be safe and free of crime.”

About the Florida Police Chiefs Association

The Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA) is the nation's pre-eminent law enforcement professional association, speaking for more than 900 of Florida's top law enforcement executives, and providing guidance and leadership for the future of law enforcement and our communities. The FPCA serves municipal, airport, college and university, and tribal police departments, as well as private businesses and security firms and federal, state and county law enforcement agencies across every region of the state. For more information about the FPCA, please visit www.fpca.com.

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