

Statement of

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President

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Chairman Wolf and Ranking Member Fattah, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before your Subcommittee today about the Police Foundation.

I am President of the Police Foundation, a national, non-partisan, non-profit organization headquartered here in Washington, D.C. dedicated to supporting innovation and improvement in policing through research, technical assistance, training, professional services, and communication programs. The purpose of the Foundation is to advance policing through innovation and science by helping law enforcement agencies be more efficient and effective in serving and protecting their communities

Unlike many organizations, we strive to conduct research for policing, not just on policing. This makes a profound difference in how we conduct and disseminate research. Our goals are two-fold. First, we conduct rigorous scientific research so that relevant results that can be directly applied to police policy or practice. Our research is designed to address the questions, challenges, and problems faced by contemporary law enforcement agencies. Second, we act as a translational agent to move existing research from theory into practice. We strive to translate the larger world of scientific research into actionable information for law enforcement agencies and policy makers across our nation.

I accepted the position as the Foundation's President in September 2012 after a 33 year career in the Police Department of Redlands, California where I was Chief of Police as well as Director of the City's Housing, Recreation, and Senior Services for 14 years. As Chief, I developed a holistic approach to community policing and problem solving that consolidated housing and recreational services into the Police Department, based on risk and protective factor research into adolescent problem prevention. This strategy was recognized as one of the country's 25 most innovative programs in 2000 by Harvard's Kennedy School's "Innovations in American Government".

Established by the Ford Foundation in 1970, the Police Foundation's mission is to bring leading scholars into a long-lasting, constructive partnership with law enforcement. When the Police Foundation began its work, social experimentation was not a well-established discipline, but rather a developing art. It was the Police Foundation, in cooperation with police departments all over the country, that engendered a questioning of the traditional models of professional law enforcement and the testing of new approaches to policing. The Foundation has established and refined the capacity to define, design, conduct, and evaluate controlled experiments and evaluation research to improve the delivery of police services, and provide more effective and efficient strategies. Since 1993, the Foundation has provided community policing research, training, and technical assistance to more than 1,000 law enforcement agencies and communities throughout the country.

As your Subcommittee provides both oversight of and funding for federal law enforcement programs in the Department of Justice, my purpose today is to share with you some of our thinking on emerging national issues. I am not here today seeking funding for the Police Foundation, but I would like to extend an invitation to the Members and staff of the Subcommittee to use us a resource as you develop and fund federal law enforcement programs in the future in the very constrained federal budget environment.

In February, the Police Foundation issued a press release on a Prevention Model for Mental Health-Related Gun Violence. In the wake of the unspeakable tragedy in Newtown, CT, and amid the complex ongoing political debate about the role of firearms in incidents of mass violence in America, the Police Foundation convened a distinguished group of experts from the law enforcement, science, mental

health, and policy arenas to focus on gun violence and its connection to mental illness. Drawing upon a multidisciplinary body of knowledge - which establishes the extreme difficulty in predicting a violent act - the expert group distilled existing research into a preliminary framework predicated on knowledge, partnerships and practice that combines prevention and intervention strategies to give communities and the police a path to preventing mental health-related shootings rather than simply responding to the scene of yet another tragedy. The group concluded that is possible to construct a straightforward, practical model that can provide the police and the communities they serve with practical, no-to-low cost recommendations that can be quickly implemented.

While a national response is important and necessary, we can and should find ways to address mental health-related gun violence at the local level. The police, school officials, mental health specialists, parents, and community leaders need practical, evidence-based suggestions about the prevention of these tragedies. And they need them now. It is possible to leverage the taxpayers' investment in policing, mental health systems, and research into "what works" by giving the police three clear recommendations about preventing mental health-related gun violence. They are:

1. Police chiefs and sheriffs should use the bully pulpit afforded them to keep community focus on the need for mental health services and convene local service providers and community members to enhance knowledge about local needs, services, and the science of mental illness and gun violence;
2. The police should create local partnerships with mental health service providers, school officials, and appropriate community groups to develop a mental health crisis response capacity; and,
3. Police chiefs and sheriffs should adopt specific policies and practices that help reduce the availability of firearms to people in mental health crisis, institutionalize mental health training for their officers, and facilitate community-wide "mental health first aid" training for all community members.

We believe that federal grant programs to local law enforcement agencies should dove-tail with this on-the-ground strategy.

Turning to the general topic of preventing and fighting crime, cities face a growing number of fiscal challenges, among them balancing the need to combat crime, be responsive to residents in communities, and wisely use taxpayer dollars. An October 2011 report released by the US Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing (COPS Office) demonstrated the tremendous changes local law enforcement agencies have undergone as a result of strained budgets in the current economy. The COPS Office found that an estimated 10,000-12,000 law enforcement officers and sheriff's deputies were laid off in 2011; that approximately 30,000 law enforcement jobs were unfilled; and that 53 percent of counties had fewer staff than they had in October 2010. Agencies reported changes in the delivery of law enforcement services, including not responding to motor vehicle thefts, burglar alarms and motor vehicle accidents that do not result in injuries; decreasing investigations of a variety of crimes, including property and white collar crimes; and reducing investments in technology, communications and officer training.

Decreases in funding for public safety mean that police departments cannot support an ever-increasing number of law enforcement officers — or, in many cases, even the status quo. Therefore, police officials must shift their attention to more efficient and effective strategies, generated from well-designed scientific examination of what works to control crime and disorder. That model is called evidence-based policing (EBP), and it represents the field's most powerful force for change. It is also an area of intense interest for the Police Foundation.

EBP leverages the country's investment in police and criminal justice research to help develop, implement and evaluate proactive crime-fighting strategies. It is an approach to controlling crime and disorder that promises to be more effective and less expensive than the traditional response-driven models, which cities can no longer afford. With fewer resources available, it simply does not make sense for the police to pursue crime control strategies that science has proven ineffective.

Evidence-based policing offers a practical solution to the need to balance public safety, community service needs, available funds and taxpayer expectations. It blends the science of controlling crime and disorder with the principles of community policing and problem solving. It helps communities focus on meaningful, achievable public safety outcomes without breaking their budgets. And it can be

implemented without adding law enforcement officers, disrupting police organizations or offending community members. It can also help police departments strengthen their legitimacy with the diverse communities they serve, and come up with more effective management strategies. One such example is our recent experiment on the length of officers' shifts that demonstrated that officers assigned to 10-hour shifts were more rested than those on 8 or 12-hour shifts, and worked significantly less overtime. This finding suggests an approach that can reduce costs and risks to the safety of officers and the residents in their communities.

Examples of emerging areas in need of policing research are the use of police Unmanned Ariel Vehicles (UAV's), commonly referred to as "drones," and "3D printers." Research into the police use of UAV's opens the door to needed dialogue on what is appropriate for the use of drones in law enforcement that would not pose undue threats to safety, would maximize the ability to appropriately identify crisis situations as they unfold, and conform to the privacy rights of individuals. 3D printers are devices that "print" a three dimensional object using a CAD/CAM design in a computer. Like any other technology, bad people can use it for bad purposes. The ability for a person to make a weapon at home using a personal computer printing device will beget a number of new challenges for law enforcement at all levels of government.

As the Subcommittee develops future legislation, I urge you to investigate, promote, and enhance the use of evidence-based policing research and strategies when the federal government provides funds to local law enforcement organizations and to promote sharing of evidence-based policy information, ideas, and successes between different communities and regions of the country.

I thank all the Members of the Subcommittee for allowing me this opportunity to testify today about the Foundation and how its work can leverage taxpayer investments to improve on-the-ground outcomes, and thank you for your service to our nation.