



# Press Release

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**Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA)**  
**National Asian Peace Officers' Association (NAPOA),**  
**National Latino Peace Officers Association (NLPOA)**  
**National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)**  
**National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE)**  
**Women in Federal Law Enforcement (WIFLE)**

**Support the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Report**

*Citing the Urgent Need for Transformational Culture Change in Policing  
through the Recruitment, Hiring, Retention, and Promotion of  
Women and Minorities*

(Arlington, VA) Our organizations endorse the overarching strategies highlighted in the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Report. This document brings to the forefront many critical policing issues, including the recent misconduct, and in some cases illegal actions, by certain law enforcement officers that reflect negatively on the entire law enforcement profession. In their aftermath, these actions have eroded the trust of the communities that we, as law enforcement professionals, have sworn to protect and serve. We applaud and support the historic findings outlined by the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. Our goal is to ensure that the law enforcement community takes full advantage of this unique opportunity in time to lead and inspire a transformational culture change within the profession. Our top priority is a call to action to achieve a culture change for local, state and federal law enforcement. To accomplish this goal, we must increase the number of women and minorities in every law enforcement agency -- at every organizational level -- throughout the United States.

Although recent discussions have centered on diversity in policing, few have addressed the real benefits of gender balance to achieve optimal effectiveness in policing. To acknowledge and utilize the varying skills and talents that women and minorities bring to the profession is to

enhance the effective and positive responses within the communities we serve. Research (and many anecdotal successes), clearly demonstrates that recruiting, hiring, retaining and promoting women; diversifying law enforcement agencies to mirror the community; and recruiting and hiring a new generation of diverse candidates would not only change the face of policing, it will transform law enforcement's ability to re-build trust back into the relationship within the communities we serve. There is nothing more important to the future of law enforcement today than the successful recruitment, retention, and promotion of highly qualified women and minorities. This is a difficult step, given the current culture in policing and as evidenced by the fact that women represent an average of approximately 13% of all police officers in the United States – but it is a necessary first step. We believe this is paramount to the reestablishment of trust and legitimacy within the communities. Then, and only then, will culture change in policing begin to emerge.

A police officer's job descriptions must be revised, as it is the starting point of what is expected of our law enforcement officers. A "good cop" is a good communicator, a problem solver, highly effective in de-escalating situations, tactically sound, has good judgment, and is respectful of all of our communities citizens regardless of their race, color, religion, genetic information, gender, national origin, disability (physical or mental), parental status, sexual orientation, age, reprisal, socio-economic status or ethnic background. Tactics can be taught by police academia for successful control over physical situations; we however, cannot train our way out of inherent bias. Eliminating inherent bias requires a thorough and complete review and reevaluation of position requirements, as well as recruitment, retention, hiring and promotion focusing on increasing the diversity of our law enforcement agencies across the country, particularly increasing the number of women.

Findings from independent audits show that "the culture" is so engrained that most police departments or law enforcement agencies were unaware that conscious and unconscious bias "exists" in their organizations. This bias adversely impacts the recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes of most police departments and law enforcement agencies – to include those departments and agencies whose leaders are actively trying to revamp or create robust programs to hire women and minorities. All departments and agencies need to evaluate, (whole

or in part), the following policies and programs within their current Organizational/Agency-Wide Recruitment Strategy (OARS):

- The OARS should include an evaluation of your current outreach/targeted recruitment plan; recruitment materials; position descriptions; website/vacancy announcements; recruitment boards; women/diversity advisory committee; role of executives/managers; recruitment and hiring processes; written exams; drug policy; interview process; polygraph; background process; selection process; appointment and hiring authorities; student career program; police academy requirements; firearms qualification; issued weapon selection/caliber; prior firearms experience; weapon/grip selection; physical fitness/tactical requirements; family-friendly policies; mobility policy; mentoring; and pregnancy/childcare issues.

Past independent audits concluded that police departments and law enforcement agencies were also not aware that their recruitment, retention and hiring policies and procedures contained “artificial barriers” that reflect archaic non-relevant requirements and skill sets that have not been updated to be more inclusive of the skills necessary for the complex role of policing in today’s society. Artificial barriers often include a disproportionate emphasis on non-job relevant physical requirements (such as climbing a 6 ft. solid wall, pull ups and pushups) with a lack of emphasis on other more relevant policing skills such as: communication; report writing; judgment and problem solving; de-escalation of conflict/violent crime; intelligence analysis; and working collaboratively across communities and cultures. Research validates that these are the very skill sets that women bring to the law enforcement profession. Prioritizing this one commitment -- to evaluate and modernize existing policies -- would accelerate the creation of a sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce model that focuses on more effective policing of American communities.

We recommend the establishment of an independent consolidated consulting group dedicated to the recruitment and advancement of women and minorities in law enforcement. This entity would provide assistance and guidance to law enforcement agencies that are auditing their processes to minimize or eliminate those policies and procedures that create artificial barriers to the recruiting, hiring and retaining women and minorities. For agencies that lack the resources to make these needed fundamental changes, this entity would be integral to facilitating positive

change. As mentioned throughout this document, our collective goal is to establish more contemporary police departments and law enforcement agencies that better represent the communities they serve by providing additional strategies and suggestions for successfully accomplishing department/agency recruitment and hiring goals.

In addition, grants and incentive funds should also be tied into achieving specific recruitment and hiring goals. On the federal side, it is recommended that law enforcement agencies be held accountable for recruitment and hiring goals highlighted in Executive Order 13583 -- the Coordinated Government-Wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion, signed by President Obama in 2011. The President's Executive Order and the subsequent OPM Strategic Plan for Diversity and Inclusion were not only designed to promote diversity and inclusion, but directed executive departments to implement a comprehensive strategy for achieving equal employment opportunity by identifying and removing barriers that hinder an inclusive workforce. Even though diversity and inclusion remains a top priority, executive leaders and senior officials are not being held accountable for meeting the requirements of the Executive Order and OPM mandates. In addition, SES selections, promotions, and bonuses are not being challenged among consistently low workforce representation of women and minorities.

Law enforcement executives and leaders have an undeniable responsibility to hold themselves accountable for fully representing the communities served -- a fundamental responsibility that has not yet been achieved. Our organizations are committed to working with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in Policing Task Force and every law enforcement organization across the country. Make no mistake, in the absence of strong leadership and a genuine commitment to change the culture of policing, the citizens of our communities will -- and should - continue to hold police departments and law enforcement agencies publicly accountable. We are willing and able to be part of the solution that sets the platform for change by working collaboratively, through the aforementioned recommendations, to ensure that the law enforcement profession is a diverse and inclusive representation of the communities we serve.

This alliance of organizations is also drafting a more detailed response to the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Report and Implementation Guide containing recommendations and strategies to achieve culture change in law enforcement through the increase in the number

of women and minorities in every law enforcement agency -- at every organizational level -- throughout the United States. The Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association (HAPCOA), National Latino Peace Officers Association (NLPOA) National Asian Peace Officers' Association (NAPOA), National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) and Women in Federal Law Enforcement (WIFLE) have formed The National Coalition of Law Enforcement Organizations (NCLEO) and is partnering with National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE) in support the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Report and are partners of this announcement.