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LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION LEADERS CONDEMN ATTACKS ON VOTING RIGHTS

Leaders say suppression and intimidation tactics threaten a fair election and undermine public safety.

Today, 79 elected prosecutors and law enforcement leaders, including 11 Attorneys General, issued a joint statement condemning efforts to undermine the voting process – including interference with the Postal Service and threats of deploying law enforcement officials to police the polls. The leaders from across the United States – including key election states such as Arizona, Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Michigan and Wisconsin – decried these attacks as both a threat to democracy and public safety.

Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP), a network of elected prosecutors across the nation, issued the joint statement. In it, the law enforcement leaders and elected prosecutors underscore that the right to vote is “fundamental to our democracy and our identity as Americans, regardless of political affiliation.” They recount the grave harm that flows from interfering with the voting process: “[R]ecent threats and intimidation tactics, including deploying law enforcement to police the polls, raises the prospect of voter intimidation, further damaging the fragile bonds of trust between law enforcement and communities they serve. And this is playing out at a critical time when trust is at an all-time low. That is why, as leaders charged with protecting public safety, we call for free and fair elections and condemn efforts to interfere with the Postal Service and undermine the voting process.”

“Many elected leaders have made extensive efforts to shield their communities from the deadly threat of COVID-19, but recent attacks on the Postal Service and efforts to undermine confidence in vote by mail may compel voters to choose between their health and the exercise of the fundamental right to vote – and risk turning polling booths into hotbeds of contagion,” said FJP Executive Director Miriam Krinsky. “Meanwhile, attacks on the democratic process and rule of law imperil public trust in government, and it is not surprising that confidence in law enforcement has fallen to an all-time low.”

The joint statement comes in the wake of President Trump’s August 20 statement that he intends to send “sheriffs and law enforcement...and attorney generals” to the polls. The signers note that the President has no authority to order state and local law enforcement to the polls, and that the law forbids federal interference with elections, including by deploying armed forces. Further, the statement notes that voting fraud is exceedingly rare.
“Law enforcement leaders understand that earning the public’s trust – especially at a moment of deepening distrust and civil unrest in our communities – must be our highest priority,” said Mecklenburg County, NC Sheriff Garry L. McFadden. “The threat to deploy law enforcement to the polls, in a move reminiscent of the Jim Crow south, is a slap in the face of those efforts to fortify confidence in law enforcement and raises significant voter intimidation and suppression concerns.”

The signers of the joint statement underscore that protecting community trust is tethered to promoting public safety: “Public trust in democracy, the rule of law, and the integrity of our government is integral to public safety. When one system is attacked and fails, it compromises the ability of all systems to function, including our criminal justice system. And when communities do not trust us, we cannot effectively keep them safe.”

“Attempting to undermine the integrity of the election is just another example of how the Trump Administration is making our streets less safe by sowing division,” said Delaware Attorney General Kathy Jennings. “At a time when we need national unity and to rebuild public trust in government, it’s paramount that these attacks on our democracy cease immediately and that all elected leaders work to preserve free and fair elections.”

A full copy of the FJP statement is available here and the full list of signatories is below.

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*Fair and Just Prosecution* brings together newly elected local prosecutors as part of a network of leaders committed to promoting a justice system grounded in fairness, equity, compassion and fiscal responsibility.

**List of Signatories**

Amy Ashworth  
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Prince William County, Virginia

Aramis Ayala  
State Attorney, Ninth Judicial Circuit, Florida

Hector Balderas  
Attorney General, State of New Mexico

Diana Becton  
District Attorney, Contra Costa County, California

Wesley Bell  
Prosecuting Attorney, St. Louis County, Missouri

Buta Biberaj  
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Loudoun County, Virginia
Richard Biehl  
Chief, Dayton Police Department, Ohio

Sherry Boston  
District Attorney, DeKalb County, Georgia

Chesa Boudin  
District Attorney, City and County of San Francisco, California

RaShall M. Brackney  
Chief, Charlottesville Police Department, Virginia

Aisha Braveboy  
State’s Attorney, Prince George’s County, Maryland

Patrick J. Cahillane  
Sheriff, Hampshire County, Massachusetts

Danny Carr  
District Attorney, Jefferson County, Birmingham Division, Alabama

John T. Chisholm  
District Attorney, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

John Choi  
County Attorney, Ramsey County, Minnesota

Darcel Clark  
District Attorney, Bronx County, New York

Jerry L. Clayton  
Sheriff, Washtenaw County, Michigan

Dave Clegg  
District Attorney, Ulster County, New York

Shameca Collins  
District Attorney, Sixth Judicial District, Mississippi

Scott Colom  
District Attorney, Sixteenth Judicial District, Mississippi
John Creuzot
District Attorney, Dallas County, Texas

Paula Dance
Sheriff, Pitt County, North Carolina

Satana Deberry
District Attorney, Durham County, North Carolina

Parisa Dehghani-Tafti
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, Virginia

Steve Descano
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Fairfax County, Virginia

Thomas J. Donovan, Jr.
Attorney General, State of Vermont

Michael Dougherty
District Attorney, Twentieth Judicial District, Colorado

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District Attorney, Wyandotte County, Kansas

Keith Ellison
Attorney General, State of Minnesota

Aaron Ford
Attorney General, State of Nevada

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State’s Attorney, Cook County, Illinois

Kimberly Gardner
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Sarah F. George
State’s Attorney, Chittenden County, Vermont

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District Attorney, Salt Lake County, Utah
Joe Gonzales
District Attorney, Bexar County, Texas

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District Attorney, Kings County, New York

Mark Gonzalez
District Attorney, Nueces County, Texas

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Mark R. Herring
Attorney General, State of Virginia

Jim Hingeley
Commonwealth’s Attorney, Albemarle County, Virginia

Art Howell
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John Hummel
District Attorney, Deschutes County, Oregon

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Kathleen Jennings
Attorney General, State of Delaware

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District Attorney, Queens County, New York

Zach Klein
City Attorney, Columbus, Ohio

Justin F. Kollar
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District Attorney, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Chris Magnus  
Chief, Tucson Police Department, Arizona

Beth McCann  
District Attorney, Second Judicial District, Colorado

Garry McFadden  
Sheriff, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

Ryan Mears  
Prosecuting Attorney, Marion County, Indiana

Spencer Merriweather  
District Attorney, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

Brian Middleton  
District Attorney, Fort Bend County, Texas

Quentin Miller  
Sheriff, Buncombe County, North Carolina

Tom Miller  
Attorney General, State of Iowa

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Commonwealth’s Attorney, City of Portsmouth, Virginia

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District Attorney, Hinds County, Mississippi

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