



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

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Greetings from your Executive Director:

We have quite a few updates for you as we head into fall:

The WASPC Board approved providing an amicus brief for the Grants Pass case, which if it is not taken up by the U.S. Supreme Court would make the requirements for *Martin v. Boise* even more onerous and take away a lot of potential tools to deal with homeless encampments. Here is a [story](#) from the national media and a story from [KREM TV](#) with more background. WASPC's brief is accessible on the U.S. Supreme Court's website [here](#): and the full docket, including all of the other (currently 23) amicus briefs, is [available here](#).

You have heard from us before that many of the statewide task forces and working groups regarding public safety issues focus mainly on new ways to reduce sentences, minimize or ignore the harm done by criminals, and excuse them for their criminal acts. We have shared in this newsletter the frustration of members of these state task forces (many are WASPC members) as you raise issues and concerns about victims but are frequently ignored or marginalized. This week, a longtime victims advocate went [public with her concerns](#) and explained why she could no longer work within a system that blames victims and excuses criminals. It is worth reading. Chiefs Greg Cobb of Union Gap PD and Brian Smith of Port Angeles PD, our representatives on the Sentencing Guidelines Commission, have expressed similar frustration and acknowledge the excellent work of the author of the column. Chief Cobb sent along these remarks:

The author of the Seattle Times article, Tiffany Attrill worked closely with WASPC on the Criminal Sentencing Task Force, which was established to review state sentencing laws and make consensus-based recommendations to the Washington State Legislature. The CSTF was to focus on three things:

1. *Reducing sentencing implementation complexities and errors*
2. *Improving the effectiveness of the sentencing system*
3. *Promoting and improving public safety*

Chief Smith (Port Angeles PD) and I found Ms. Attrill to be a passionate proponent of victims' rights and fervently articulated the concerns of victims and their families related to the work of the CSTF. In her article for the Seattle Times, Ms. Attrill accurately described our criminal justice system's current state of affairs. Chief Smith and I heard the same mantra Ms. Attrill wrote about, repeated regularly during our time with the CSTF. WASPC had few allies in trying to contain some of the proposed CSTF recommendations that would have had negative consequences for public safety. Ms. Attrill however was one of them. She should be congratulated for a job well done.

WASPC will continue to work on behalf of victims.

Many of you have already registered for our Fall conference in November. Eric Daigle will be back as a speaker to provide updates on use of force trends, liability and other issues we are seeing locally and nationally. In addition, we will conduct three critical issues forums-

1. Panel on Officer Involved Shootings and the Office of Independent Investigations. We will bring together executives, attorneys, IIT leads, and experts on what they see with cases and incidents to discuss upcoming changes, transitions, the "lay of the land" on Garrity, statements, and what Chiefs and Sheriffs should be thinking about as the system evolves;
2. A panel of legislators to talk about the challenges of advocating for good public safety policies in our current political environment;
3. Innovative Approaches to Recruitment and Onboarding.

Speaking of IITs and OII, at our recent WASPC Board meeting, the Board approved the creation of a new Ad Hoc committee on IIT/OII. The committee will review and discuss rules, the legal environment, and trends on IITs and to recommend to the WASPC members and Board suggested changes, and to liaise with the CJTC and OII as they develop new rules. This will provide a mechanism to ensure attention to how these changes are working or not working, and to make sure the goals of transparency, professionalism and building trust are paramount. We will keep you in the loop as that group's charter is developed.

Congratulations and thanks go out to our two recently appointed members of the State Firearms Background Check Advisory Committee, Island County Sheriff Rick Felici and Lake Stevens Chief Jeff Beazizo.

Our legislative committee met recently and forwarded three main legislative agenda items for the upcoming session:

- Continue to improve pursuit laws;

- Fix the Unintended Consequences of the Juvenile Access to Attorney law;
- Recruitment and retention funding.

The WASPC board has reviewed the agenda items, and they will be voted upon by our members, as required by our bylaws, at the November conference. When the session starts in January, we will offer weekly webinar updates as we have done in the past few years.

Last week, Wenatchee Chief (and WASPC Past President) Steve Crown shared this [press release](#). As he points out, when a one-year-old almost dies from a fentanyl overdose in your community, it illustrates our legislature's failed experiment in developing policies centered around drug possession. This case could have easily had a tragic outcome if the NARCAN had not been administered in time. Last week, in daycare in the Bronx, a [child was not so fortunate](#).

In the Wenatchee case, the criminal behavior of the parent will be punished at the gross misdemeanor level due to the fact that Reckless Endangerment was the only appropriate charge as the *mens rea* did not exist to charge the crime of Assault of a Child Third Degree. Be aware that WASPC has supported [SB 5010](#) and its previous successors, and will continue to, so that prosecutors can charge felonies for these tragic situations.

Finally, this week, please join us in congratulating our WASPC Deputy Policy Director, Taylor Garder, for passing the Washington State Bar this summer- great job Taylor and we are all grateful she is part of our WASPC team!

Stay safe! Steve