



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

SHERIFF KIERAN DONAHUE
President

January 13, 2025

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Ranking-member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

I write today on behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association and the 3,081 elected Sheriffs serving our nation's security interests.

The border crisis, rising crime rates, and the devastating fentanyl epidemic are among the most pressing concerns for law enforcement today. Addressing these challenges requires stronger communication and transparency between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. Sheriffs and local law enforcement leaders are eager to work more collaboratively with federal partners to enhance coordination, share intelligence, and develop cohesive strategies to combat transnational criminal organizations, human trafficking, and the unchecked flow of drugs like fentanyl, which continues to claim countless lives across the nation.

Equally critical is addressing the ongoing crisis in our nation's jails. Jails are not simply holding facilities; they are central to the safety and health of our communities, and the individuals who operate them perform vital yet often underappreciated roles. The Department of Justice (DOJ) must recognize the unique challenges faced by jails and prioritize the support they require, including addressing the pervasive mental health crisis. We can no longer resort to incarcerating individuals in jails as a substitute for hospitalization and treatment. This practice is unsustainable, unjust, and perpetuates harm.

Sheriffs, as elected officials, uniquely represent the voices and needs of the people they serve. Their dual role as both law enforcement and jail administrators gives them unparalleled insight into the reforms necessary to restore balance and fairness within the justice system. The DOJ can no longer disregard the needs of jails while prioritizing federal and state prisons exclusively. A meaningful shift in focus is long overdue, and we are encouraged by the opportunity for real change under new leadership.

Ms. Bondi's commitment to directing U.S. Attorneys to take a proactive approach in prosecuting federal crimes is a welcome and needed form of leadership for local law enforcement. Ensuring that federal crimes are consistently charged when appropriate will strengthen accountability. The

effective use of federal sentencing guidelines can *and* should complement state laws, providing an essential backstop to thwart and punish both criminal enterprises and dangerous individual acts.

It is critical that the Department of Justice (DOJ) be led by someone who not only understands these complex challenges but can also effectively communicate them and work collaboratively with law enforcement on permanent solutions—all while commanding the full confidence of the President.

The NSA is heartened that President-elect Donald Trump selected former Florida Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi to serve as the next U.S. Attorney General of the DOJ. Her resume reflects the credentials, skills, temperament, commitment, and experience for this critical position. Her distinguished career reflects her unwavering dedication to justice and her ability to lead with integrity, transparency, and a results-driven approach. Her commitment to strengthening partnerships among local, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement is evident in her prior work, and we are confident she will bring the same focus and energy to this critical role.

If confirmed, Ms. Bondi has pledged to prioritize the needs of law enforcement by fostering a culture of collaboration and direct engagement. Her recognition of the importance of local perspectives and her willingness to work alongside rank-and-file officers, as well as leadership, are essential to overcoming the pressing challenges we face. Her ability to restore trust and accountability within the Department of Justice will be instrumental in protecting our communities and upholding the principles of justice.

We are pleased to give our enthusiastic endorsement of Ms. Pam Bondi's nomination to be the U.S. Attorney General and urge the Committee hold hearings expeditiously. We believe there will be broad support for Ms. Bondi and we look forward to her swift confirmation by the full United States Senate.

Very Respectfully,



Sheriff Kieran Donahue
Canyon County, ID
President
National Sheriffs' Association

Cc: POTUS-elect
Senator John Thune, Majority Leader
Senator Charles Schumer, Minority Leader
Jonathan Thompson, Executive Director/CEO