



# The National Police Wives Association

*It's time to bring everyone to the table... All in this together!!*

To All This May Concern:

We stand at a moment in time. Time to talk about real change in our country. A time where everyone's hearts and minds are focused on equality, justice, fairness, and inclusion. A time for everyone to come to the table and finally listen, not just to hear, but to understand and be heard. As proud family members of law enforcement Officers, we could not be more hopeful. As spouses and families, we have watched with silent concern from the sidelines for far too long. We stand united as the bridge to community trust, understanding, and faith in our loved ones that proudly put on their uniforms daily to serve and protect the communities we call home. Unfortunately, we have witnessed this bridge being slowly torn down. While we believe there is blame to be shared by all for this breakdown, it is both selfish and unproductive to continue down the path of pointing fingers and using divisive rhetoric. As community members and law enforcement family members we are asking for more from you. We know you believe we all deserve better! We have come to learn through our leadership coach and our training, that "Our Response is our Responsibility." We feel as though we can no longer reasonably stand by in silence. We know that the time has come to speak about Police Reform. We, too believe that standards need to be raised. As community members we, too believe that we should have the best Officers; Officers who are well paid, have the most up to date training and have access to the best mental wellness resources and tools. This is a priority. We see firsthand what long hours, trauma, lack of planning, and minimal commitment to mental health has caused. It takes only a moment to look at the numbers and data provided by our partners at Blue Help with regard to suicide in law enforcement. Suicide has surpassed line of duty deaths and has become the number one cause of death for Officers. Yet, we all still turn a blind eye. We want to see Officers given the additional and unlimited resources they need, to not only respond to communities that are in danger or in crisis, but also when Officers are called to respond to social issues. These community concerns require follow-up and partnership with other agencies to assist. These issues weigh heavily on us as families and, quite frankly, as community members. There is so much to lose if we don't get this right. We have come to ask for your help during this transitional time. We know it is important to you, as lawmakers and elected officials, to have the facts. When attempting to legislate issues that so profoundly impact the community at large, having good, unbiased, and credible information from all sides is essential.

We are asking that before you make any decisions about how Officers perform their everyday tasks and duties you, personally, do the few things listed below. We also encourage any other parties who are consulting or advising on these issues to do the same.

- Sit down and review the information provided during Citizens Academies given by your Police Department.
- Go on ride-alongs during several shifts, in several areas in your city. This should definitely include high crime areas over the weekend, and any other times the Police Department may experience a high volume in calls.

THE  
G  
D  
O  
N  
E

- Go through a Police Simulator with the use of force scenarios and document your results for study. As you begin to legislate or form your opinions on Officer response, these notes will be so helpful and useful to understand what might go through an Officer's mind in those milliseconds they have to act!!
- Lastly – and this is most important – arrange to sit down and talk with widows and family members of Fallen Officers. Talk with Wounded and Injured Officers, both permanently disabled and those who were able to return to work after their challenges. Sit down with spouses and families of those who have committed suicide. Finally, speak with Officers who have had to cut their careers short due to issues with PTSD and other issues that sprung from trauma experienced because of the weight of the job. We would be happy to facilitate meetings with any of the families who are dealing with these challenges listed above.

We are respectfully asking your consideration of these requests. Right now, in our homes and all across the country, we are seeing what happens when our Officers feel distressed and frustrated when they feel they cannot do the job that they swore an oath to do without fear that they will put their own families and livelihood at risk, and when they cannot respond and protect the public as they were called to do. We have all seen the drastic steps Officers feel they need to take. We are concerned as spouses, families, and community members about what will happen if we continue toward this trend of mass resignations, confusion, and general hopelessness about how to do the job. For us, there is so much more to lose than just a paycheck. The decisions being made affect our very lives, and public safety as a whole.

In recent weeks, in the court of public opinion, the complete and total way those in the law enforcement profession have been marginalized and come under attack has caused great difficulty, pain, and strife in all our households. It's difficult to describe how hard it has become to support Officers who feel like they have lost the hearts of the communities. These are the very communities that they would die for, that Officers have in the past died for, and that they have all risked their lives to protect. We have grave concerns for Officers' mental health due to increased hours, disconnection from any normalcy, and the lack of downtime with family. We have grave concerns about the increased pressure of confusion about how to defend themselves or the public without fear of unwarranted reprisal. We are asking, as their spouses and families, for you to stand a moment in their shoes. Ask yourself, would you want to continue in a job with such uncertainty, when doing so could cost you your very life?

It's so important to get this right for all concerned. It is moments such as these that call to mind the symbolic and significant message that was captured in a tweet after the 2019 Atlanta Super Bowl by Reverend Bernice King, daughter of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in which she proclaimed "...humanity is turning the tide and our efforts must include bridgebuilders, strategic negotiators, and ambassadors." So very true and profound. We at the National Police Wives Association are asking you for your help in calling everyone to the table. The time has come!! We know all too well what is at stake. We welcome the talks about transparency and accountability and welcome the opportunity to be invited to that table, to play the part that Ms. King so eloquently envisioned.

Please let us know how we can further help. You will find contact information for our President Kelli Lowe, listed here in this letter. Please let us know when we can arrange a meeting to introduce our leaders and ambassadors in your area, and discuss our special initiative "Enough." We would love to be strategic negotiators to help begin to rebuild the bridges into both worlds that have become broken.

Respectfully,

The Executive Board and Members of  
The National Police Wives Association