



National Sheriffs Association

December 22, 2014

President John Aubrey (Jefferson County, Kentucky) and the Board of Directors of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) is saddened by the tragic killings of two New York City Police Department officers this past Saturday. The killing of Officer Rafael Ramos and Officer Wenjian Liu, who were shot while sitting in their patrol car, brings the total to four law enforcement officer assassinations in the last three months. This trend is troubling and cause for great concern in the law enforcement community. Our condolences go out to the families and NYPD co-workers of Officers Ramos and Liu. These two officers have given the ultimate sacrifice.

Since the incident in Ferguson, MO, anti-police rhetoric has saturated our society via social media. This rhetoric has been fueled in part by some irresponsible politicians and members of the news media who have made statements condemning the entire law enforcement profession, and who have contributed to an unjustified hatred of the dedicated police officers and sheriffs' deputies all over this country. These irresponsible statements and the broad brush paintings of the entire law enforcement profession have also filtered down to mentally ill individuals in our society who believe they are the next avenger of "justice." It's time for all of this to stop!

We have a system of justice which may not be perfect, but is the best in the world and has been in our Constitution for over 200 years. The system is based on the participation of citizens and may lead to results in particular cases that some individuals don't like, but spreading mass hatred for law enforcement is not the answer.

The reasons for the societal ills of crime, poverty, mental illness, etc., are complex and many, but are not the fault of law enforcement. The politicians, activists, and reporters who are fueling the current anti-police rhetoric need to work harder to find solutions rather than blame law enforcement. Over the next few weeks the Board of Directors of the National Sheriffs' Association will be looking at this disturbing trend and working with other law enforcement associations to carve a path forward, identify resources to improve law enforcement and community relations, and promote and strengthen officer safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Thompson". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "T".

John Thompson
Interim Executive Director
National Sheriffs' Association