



## **2022 NDAACapital Conference Overview**

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The National District Attorneys Association (NDAAC) had the honor of welcoming State and local prosecutors to our 2022 Capital Conference on January 24th-25th in Washington, DC. Attendees spent their time collaborating with members of the Biden Administration, justice system advocates and Capitol Hill staff to advocate for and represent the needs of prosecutors across the country.

On Tuesday, the conference opened with lecture sessions that allowed attendees to hear about a wide range of topics and efforts from a politically-diverse group of speakers. To begin the day, our prosecutors heard from Ryan Raybould, Chief Counsel, & Franci Rooney, Counsel, from the Office of Senator John Cornyn (R-TX). Senator Cornyn serves as the Senior United States Senator from Texas and has since worked tirelessly to support law enforcement and prosecutors by working with local, state, and federal authorities to give them the legal tools and funding resources necessary to succeed at their jobs and serve their communities to their full capacity. Currently, NDAAC is working alongside Senator Cornyn and his team to fulfill such goals. These initiatives include the Justice for All Reauthorization Act, the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Act (RSAT), and the Project Safe Childhoods Reauthorization Act.

Next, attendees heard from Tom Chittum, the Acting Deputy Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives (ATF). ATF's mission is to protect communities from alcohol, tobacco, firearm, and explosive-related crimes like the illegal use and trafficking of such items, acts of arson and bombings, acts of terrorism, and other such crimes. Acting Deputy Director Chittum informed attendees of ATF's mission and their capabilities to help prosecutors disrupt violent crime within their communities. Following the Acting Deputy Director's remarks, the topic changed quickly to student loans and prosecutor retention. Attendees met with Aoife Delargy, Vice President of Law School Engagement and Advocacy at Equal Justice Works. Aoife informed attendees on their access to educational debt forgiveness and Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), the requirements of prosecutors and their offices to qualify for such forgiveness, and the steps that they need to take to earn forgiveness following ten years in public service. To wrap up the first half of the day, attendees heard from Greg Ehrie, Vice President of Law Enforcement and Analysis at the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). Greg informed attendees of ADL's efforts to enhance partnerships with federal, state, and local law enforcement throughout the country. Greg noted ADL's dynamic research on extremism with advancements to better equip law enforcement with information and data on developing trends to create actionable steps towards safer communities.

The first speaker after a brief break was Yiota Souras, the general counsel for the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, who spoke about the American Law Institute's (ALI)

revisions to the Model Penal Code. The specific section cited by our partners at NCMEC pertained to the sexual abuse of children and other related offenses. Souras went on to explain how the implementation of these revisions presents safety and welfare risks to children, as the ALI is amending its Model Code to remove multiple sex-based offenses from statewide registry databases available to law enforcement and the public.

Next, attendees heard from various vendors that sponsored this year's conference in a special presentation including Thomson Reuters, a media company who serves as the world's leading source of news and information for professional markets. They spoke with conference attendees about their legal solutions and how their resources can aid prosecutors in efficiency, accuracy, and establishing a larger online presence. NDAA also welcomed back our partners at the Axon Network, which connects people, devices, and apps to protect life in all regards. Whether that is through smart weapons, advanced technology, or active-duty training, Axon promises to preserve truth and accelerate justice. Further, NICE Systems Ltd. joined the Capital Conference for the first time and is a software company specializing in data security, surveillance, telephone voice recording and contact center software. They spoke with conference attendees about the importance of digitizing evidence, creating a workplace where prosecutors and staff feel empowered and valued. Finally, attendees heard from LexisNexis Legal & Professional, a leading global provider of legal, regulatory and business information and analytics that help customers increase productivity, improve decision-making and outcomes, and advance the rule of law around the world.

Attendees concluded the day by hearing from the Honorable Lisa Monaco, Deputy Attorney General of the United States Department of Justice. Deputy Attorney General Monaco joined us over zoom to discuss the importance of collaboration in the fight against violent crime in addition to highlighting how the Department of Justice continues to stand with her as criminal justice professionals work to protect our communities. NDAA followed the conversation with the Deputy Attorney General by conducting a legislative roundtable discussion with Pennington County, South Dakota State's Attorney Mark Vargo and Frederick County, Maryland State's Attorney Charlie Smith.

The following day, conference attendees went to work sharing NDAA's legislative priorities with Congressional staff. Priorities included the John R. Justice Grant Program, the Violence Against Women Act, the Equal Act of 2021, the Driving for Opportunity Act, the Homicide Victims' Families' Act of 2021, the RE-ENTER Act, the Begin Again Act, and the RSAT Reauthorization.

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