



NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NDAA Statement on Release of 2020 FBI Crime Data

ARLINGTON, VA – The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) release of 2020 crime data yesterday was a stark reminder that while crime remains significantly down from the 1990s, there is much work left to be done to combat the rise in violence, homicides, assaults and the proliferation of guns on our streets. The data confirms anecdotes from prosecutors in the field: the prevalence of guns, particularly un-serialized guns commonly called “ghost guns”, increased offenses by juveniles and increased assaults are the most pressing public safety threats encountered by law enforcement and prosecutors in many jurisdictions.

The increased violence playing out around the country is not attributable to one single factor. Rather, it’s a multitude of factors that requires a comprehensive and layered approach. This includes accountability and additional resources to enable prosecutors and law enforcement to investigate and prosecute violent crime. It also requires additional support for social programs that address inequities and barriers to housing, transportation, mental health and substance use disorder services as well as other community engagement initiatives. This multi-pronged approach builds community trust, provides the resources and services needed to address underlying socioeconomic issues and helps bridge the divide between the public safety and public health sectors.

This summer, NDAA hosted its annual conference with the theme of “Seeking Justice and Serving Communities”. Focused on addressing violent crime and prosecutor-led diversion, the tracks highlight a core sentiment of NDAA President Billy West that prosecutors should continue to promote both accountability for those who commit crimes and innovative programming that reduces contact between individuals and the criminal justice system, when appropriate. This dual approach promotes the rule of law and accountability, while also acknowledging that different approaches to issues such as mental health and substance use disorders are warranted to address underlying challenges faced by individuals. A dual approach of targeted resources to combat emerging and persistent threats to community safety such as gun violence and homicides, coupled with additional resources to address underlying community needs, provides for a comprehensive approach that strengthens the broader criminal justice system. We look forward to working with our Federal partners, community advocates, and mental health and addiction professionals to secure the safety of our communities and promote a criminal justice system that serves all Americans fairly.

Formed in 1950, NDAA is the oldest and largest national organization representing state and local prosecutors in the country. With more than 5,000 members representing over two thirds of the state and local prosecutors’ offices, NDAA is recognized as the leading source of national expertise on the prosecution function and is a valuable resource for the media, academia, government, and community leaders. NDAA’s mission is to provide state and local prosecutors with the knowledge, skills, and support they need to ensure that justice is done and that public safety rights are protected.

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