

Dear Fellow Sheriffs, Deputies, and Support Staff

Like many of you, my story is not unique. I was born and raised in Wyoming which was the foundation of a life of hard work, sacrifice, and a determination to get the job done. After two tours of duty in the United States Army I entered my law enforcement career with the Hobbs Police Department in Hobbs, New Mexico. I served for 22 years and retired in 2014. During my time with the Hobbs Police Department, I served in numerous capacities such as Patrol, Swat, K-9, Criminal Investigations, ATF Task Force Agent, and Internal Affairs to name a few. My commitment to service did not end there and in 2018, I was elected to the Office of Lea County Sheriff where I continue to serve.

The Lea County Sheriff's Office is comprised of 82 sworn deputies and 11 non-sworn staff and is currently expanding. The Lea County Sheriff's Office is a full-service office to include patrol, investigations, K-9, Swat, traffic unit, explorer post, and reserve deputy program. The Lea County Sheriff's Office serves approximately 80,000 citizens comprising approximately 4,400 square miles which is rich in agriculture and oil production.

As I look to the year ahead, I'm excited and humbled to be your 2023-2024 President for the Western States Sheriffs' Association. We have many issues facing Western Sheriffs today that are complex but I'm confident, by working together, we can better serve our offices as well as our communities. Below I've highlighted key points for my vision of 2023-2024 which are issues important to the Western States Sheriff's Association as well as myself.

**ADVOCATE FOR THE OFFICE OF SHERIFF:** This remains the core principle of what Western States Sheriffs' Association stands for. I will continue to advocate for the elected office of Sheriff.

**BORDER SECURITY:** The crisis at the southern border is chaotic and out of control. The issues we are currently witnessing at our international border is not an immigration issue but rather a security issue. What is happening on our southern border is clearly a risk to our national security fueled by narco terrorists that are killing thousands of Americans. I will continue to partner with local, state, and federal partners to keep this issue on the forefront. By working together with one voice it affords us the ability to speak in unison and help navigate these difficult times.

**CONTINUE TO FOSTER COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS WITH FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT PARTNERS:**

Over the last few years WSSA has made significant strides to foster a relationship with BLM and Forest Service to better increase our communication and working relationship. Its important moving forward we continue these efforts.

**INCREASE WSSA MEMBERSHIP AND INCREASE MEMBER INVOLVEMENT:** Whether on the local, state, or federal level we are facing difficult and concerning legislation including but not limited to, 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, police reform, anti-law enforcement rhetoric, and public land management issues just to name a few. These decisions are having a significant impact on law enforcement around the country. To continue advancing our voice we need to better communicate with association members and provide up to date information. With the introduction of the WSSA App I hope to encourage and challenge membership to get involved and engaged on matters that are important to not only WSSA, but also matters affecting Western Sheriffs.

I want to congratulate the state of Missouri for becoming our 18th member state and I look forward to working with you all in the future. The Western States Sheriffs' Association has continued to grow in

terms of its membership and its ability to quickly respond to issues effecting Sheriffs, their staff, and their communities across the country. The personal relationships we have throughout our membership afford us a unique ability to come together on any given issue and speak a common message.

I look forward to serving all of you over the next 12 months and remain available to you should you need to reach out to me.

Sheriff Corey Helton  
Lea County, New Mexico  
President, WSSA