

IACP NEWS
For Immediate Release
February 10, 2011

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Police Chiefs Release Report:
***Law Enforcement's Leadership Role in the Pretrial Release
and Detention Process***

Alexandria, VA- The United States is one of only two countries that allow defendants to post a cash bond and be released from jail before being brought to trial. With many defendants considered dangerous, the risk they pose to the community is too great to allow the decision to be released from jail to be dependent exclusively upon their financial capability. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) believes that law enforcement can and should play a leadership role in addressing the issues relative to the pretrial process, particularly release or detention decisions that directly affect public and officer safety and defendant accountability.

IACP President Mark Marshall, Chief of the Smithfield, VA Police Department said, "The IACP will continue to provide law enforcement the resources and tools needed to take a leadership role in refining the pretrial release process, in order to help ensure our citizens are being kept safe. Officer and citizen safety has and will remain the number one priority of the IACP."

The IACP in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI) is proud to release a report on this issue entitled, *Law Enforcement's Leadership Role in the Pretrial Release and Detention Process*. This report focuses on the need to assess the danger a defendant poses prior to any bond decision, and promotes carefully designed pretrial release programs, using assessment tools and staff support to defendants as an effective means for safe pretrial release decisions. These programs will help not only reduce pretrial release failures – new crimes committed by those on bond— but also reduce jail overcrowding, and costly expenditures of public resources for construction and maintenance of new jail facilities. It is important for law enforcement leaders to take a stand on pretrial policy and to work collaboratively with pretrial and court officials to support pretrial programs that create accountability for all suspects arrested and subsequently released.



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“The Pretrial Justice Institute congratulates IACP for taking the leadership role in confronting our nation's current bail practices. Once again, IACP has exposed an issue that poses a significant threat to public safety and the administration of justice. PJI also acknowledges and appreciates the Bureau of Justice Assistance as well, for their continuing support of this important work,” said Tim Murray, Executive Director, PJI.

“Law enforcement officers have long expressed frustration with pretrial decision making in many communities. As the IACP has found, the opportunity to engage law enforcement professionals in the pretrial system and pretrial decision making is an idea whose time has come. This type of system-wide involvement and exchange will go a long way towards our shared goal of identifying safe, cost-effective and data-driven alternatives to incarceration for pretrial detainees,” says James H. Burch, II, Acting Director, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police is the world's oldest and largest association of law enforcement executives. Founded in 1893, the IACP has more than 22,000 members in 100 countries.

