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Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear  
700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

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Dear (Staff Member of) Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear,

As a Kentucky citizen I was angered by the false arrest of Scottie Scheffler. Thankfully he had the resources to fight to clear his name. What angers me more is thinking of the many people that don't have those resources and who's lives are ruined by lying and abusive law enforcement officers.

Almost every month there is another news story about Kentucky law enforcement violating rights, lying, and or murdering innocent people. Why does the state government protect this behavior? Is it something the government desires? There has been more than enough time and community pressure to do something about it. Why has the governor, the legislature, or the courts done something about this?

I do not hate law enforcement. That is illegal under Kentucky Revised Statute 532.031. As a volunteer firefighter and former US Congressional Staffer I have worked with many law enforcement officers. I support law enforcement.

What I do hate is law enforcement officers that violate the law. The situation is even worse when these criminals are protected by the full force of government. Law enforcement officers that break the law, and their oath, deserve to be punished. Law enforcement agencies talk about high standards, service, and honor. But when the public demands they be held accountable, the standards don't exist, the public feels unsafe, and they have no honor. The public knows that internal investigations, and investigations by the Kentucky State Police are incredibly likely to exonerate law enforcement.

Is the governor reluctant to do something about law enforcement officers breaking the law because his personal security detail is made up of Kentucky State Police officers? The Governor and his family being protected by an armed State Police Officers is a very different experience than what the citizens experience.

Not only is the perspective different, but the subconscious impact of having armed people always around his family means that he can never say anything bad about police because of a subconscious fear that the Kentucky State Police could retaliate. Even if the retaliation is being sloppy in their protection. This sets up a situation where the Governor could unknowingly experience Stockholm Syndrome. Has he developed a psychological bond with his and his family's "captors"?

As long as he says nothing negative about law enforcement, the governor and his family is safe from police abuse. There is no way the Governor could understand the public's perception of law enforcement. Therefore he cannot represent the public's will on this issue.

The Kentucky State Government was established to protect the public's rights. But in the last several years this government has done so much to illegally rob us of our rights. Law enforcement officers are the main force in this. The Governor, the legislature, and the courts have done almost nothing to hold lying and murderous law enforcement officers accountable. Even when there is overwhelming evidence that a crime has occurred, the government blocks and delays justice. Does the public have any rights if the government does not protect those rights? And if not, what use is the Kentucky government to the public?

If after years of legal proceedings a civil case is actually won, or a settlement made; it is the tax payers that pay the bill. The offending officer and agency suffers no penalty. This protects them from the consequences of their actions and further victimizes the taxpayers. Why would policing ever improve when there is no penalty for abusing the public?

The legislature has given criminal law enforcement officers immunity from civil liability. Plus they have made crimes by law enforcement penalized at a lower level than the same crimes by the public. Equal protection under the law in Kentucky is not possible with the current laws.

Why are tax payer funded law enforcement departments allowed to lobby the legislature? Since the legislature is protected by the Kentucky State Patrol too, do they suffer from a fear of retaliation? Would the Kentucky State Police protect them as well if the legislature did not support bills that the law enforcement organizations demand?

The court system has failed the public too. The state and county courts do little to hold criminal law enforcement officers and agencies accountable. And prosecutors refuse to press charges for criminal actions of law enforcement officers. Is that because the prosecutors, judges, and law enforcement officers all see themselves as being on the same side? The "Thin Blue Line" is a declaration that the public is on one side, and law enforcement, the courts, prosecutors, legislature, and governor are all on the other side. This "Thin Blue Line" mentality is antithetical to the Kentucky Constitution and will of the governed.

The law enforcement system in Kentucky is rotten. And it starts with law enforcement training. Kentucky State Police Officers are only required by state law to have 1000 hours of instruction. Local police and deputies are only required to have 800 hours of training.

A cosmetologist can mess up your haircut, make-up, and charge you too much for a perm. They have no legal immunity. Kentucky State law requires 1500 hours of training to be a licensed cosmetologist! That is 500 more hours than is required to be a Kentucky State Police Officer. And 700 hours more than to be a deputy or city police officer.

Kentucky police have fewer hours of instruction in police academy than kindergardeners have in school. K-12 schools are required to have 1062 hours of instruction per year. A preschool teacher in Kentucky is legally required to have more than four times the amount of training police are required to have.

Funeral Directors are required by the State of Kentucky to have an associates degree and spend a year as an intern. Shouldn't police that have the legal authority to kill have as much training as someone who would supervise the burying of a corpse?

Is there enough time to teach new officers all they need to know about laws, rights, high speed chases, firearms use, and so much more police are asked to do? Why does the government want under trained law enforcement officers. This is the root cause of why we have a law enforcement force that is unprofessional. The state government does not train them enough to be professional.

The Scottie Scheffler case shows us that law abiding citizens have more reasons to fear police and the judicial system than we do non-government criminals. At least with the private criminals we can fight back. The Kentucky State government will not even let the people create a voter initiative to try to solve this problem. What can we the people do to hold law enforcement accountable when the government protects the criminals?

If the Kentucky State Government will not protect the people from criminal law enforcement officers who are de facto above the law, then what is left for us to do? Are we to live like prisoners, available for abuse by criminals in law enforcement at any time? God forbid.

Sincerely,

Elliott Stoddard