

Hampton Roads Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs),
Police Chiefs/Sheriffs, and Commonwealth Attorneys

The CAOs received the following input from the Commonwealth Attorneys and Police Chiefs/Sheriffs.

- The region should request that the Commonwealth of Virginia provide funding for enhanced Witness Protection Programs. Too many times witnesses do not come forward to testify, which often results in suspects not being prosecuted.
- Our region needs to develop enhanced Case Management Systems that improve communications between localities. It was reported that current systems make it difficult for a local police department to know that a person they have in custody may be facing charges in another locality.
- Staffing challenges in our Commonwealth Attorney offices were also identified as a challenge. It was shared that compensation levels in the Commonwealth Attorney offices cannot compete with those in the private sector. Competitive pay for prosecutors is essential and should not be contingent upon a locality's ability to pay.
- The region should continue to oppose unfunded State mandates that strain our local public safety personnel.
- FLOCK Cameras should be deployed regionally — legislative authority is needed to put FLOCK cameras on VDOT managed roads — the use of license plate readers with AI plug-in should be put into a regional shared database.
- Concern was expressed that people with serious gun charges are released into our communities — there should be special consideration for violent offenses and those who continue to reoffend repeatedly to keep violent offenders off the street.
- The State needs to invest in new forensic science tools such as the ability to get DNA from shell casings — the federal government has this capability, but the State does not.
- The State needs to properly and fully fund HB 599.
- Mental health issues are not being properly addressed by the State — jails are becoming mental health facilities because of a lack of mental health bed space — also the TDO demand needs a different solution than local police.
- The State needs to revisit the jury sentencing for all cases as desired by the defendant — this has drastically increased the case load of the court, prosecutors, jurors, etc. — every city has a major backlog with insufficient resources to handle these cases.
- Suggestions were made that the State consider repealing many of the changes made to traffic codes (not being able to stop for license plate renewal, tinted windows, etc.) that have had an impact on the removal of illegal guns as well as bringing into custody those wanted on warrants.