



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

3060 Willamette Drive NE
Lacey, WA 98516
360-486-2380 (Phone)
360-486-2381 (Fax)
www.waspc.org

President
Chief Craig Meidl
City of Spokane

FOR RELEASE
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President-Elect
Sheriff Rick Scott
Grays Harbor County

Statement attribution:
Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director

Vice President
Chief Steve Crown
City of Wenatchee

**WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS
STATEMENT ON WASHINGTON STATE SUPREME COURT DECISION ON DRUG
POSSESSION**

Past President
Sheriff John Snaza
Thurston County

(Lacey, WA) – The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) expressed concern today about the effects of the Washington State Supreme Court’s decision (*State v Blake*) that Washington’s statute criminalizing simple possession of a controlled substance is unconstitutional.

Treasurer
Chief Brett Vance
City of Montesano

Executive Board

Chief John Batiste
Washington State Patrol

Our understanding is the (*State v Blake*) ruling in effect decriminalizes possession of illicit substances such as heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, and unprescribed scheduled drugs such as OxyContin and oxycodone.

Chief Gary Jenkins
City of Pullman

Sheriff Mitzi Johanknecht
King County

This is a significant and far-reaching change, and when combined with the Washington Legislature’s proposals for extensive changes to policing, sentencing, liability for officers, and removal of de-escalation tactics, we expect the changes will have real and substantial implications for public safety in our communities.

Sheriff Tom Jones
Grant County

Chief Darrell Lowe
City of Redmond

We urge our elected leaders to come together with all stakeholders and have meaningful dialogue to understand the cumulative effects and provide long-term planning focused on valuable and constructive public safety outcomes.

Chief Rafael Padilla
City of Kent

Sheriff James Raymond
Franklin County

As we have long supported, we need a comprehensive and thoughtful system to address treatment and support for addiction, not decriminalization. Drug possession may often be associated with other crimes (burglary, theft, assault) and the criminal justice system has proven to be an effective mechanism to intervene.

Director David Trujillo
Washington State
Gambling Commission

We will continue to evaluate the impact of today’s ruling.

Don Voiret, SAC
FBI—Seattle

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Steven D. Strachan
Executive Director

About WASPC:

WASPC was founded in 1963 and consists of executive and top management personnel from law enforcement agencies statewide. With more than 900 members it includes the 39 elected county sheriffs, and 240 police chiefs, as well as the Washington State Patrol, the Washington Department of Corrections, and representatives of Tribal and federal agencies.

WASPC is the only association of its kind in the nation combining representatives from local, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement into a single body, working toward a common goal. WASPC’s function is to provide specific materials and services to all law enforcement agencies in the state, members, and non-members alike.