



Washington, DC

# **Press Release: APA Issues Report on New Recommendations for State and Local Prosecutors to Address Violence Against Elected Officials, Public Servants, and Government Institutions**

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Today marks the release of the report *Prosecutors and Politics: Collaborative Strategies and Model Policies for Addressing Threats and Acts of Political Violence*.

The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) announced today the release of the report *Prosecutors and Politics: Collaborative Strategies and Model Policies for Addressing Threats and Acts of Political Violence*. This report lays out the recommendations of a bipartisan convening that took place in Detroit, Michigan and gathered prosecutors from the Great Lakes region, federal partners, law enforcement, and national experts in political violence.

The rise in political violence not only has a personal impact on the targeted individual, but also disrupts democratic processes and chills the desire of others to participate in government and civic duties. Public servants have been forced to publicly defend themselves against coordinated attacks or step down from their roles entirely. The report enumerates a set of recommendations and model strategies for state and local prosecutors to address the drastic rise in threats and acts of political violence across the United States. It is important that prosecutors recognize their responsibility to address this new level of violence in their community, while also facing threats and acts against them and their families. “A Prosecutor’s role is to make our community better. We take this responsibility seriously and we came together to develop recommendations to protect the integrity of the democratic process. Political violence has no place in our Democratic Republic,” urged the Athens County, Ohio Prosecutor, Keller Blackburn. In a poll conducted by GQR in early 2022, 83% of people want the prosecution of political violence to increase. These recommendations reflect the numerous challenges facing prosecutors, election officials, and public servants nationwide to both protect themselves and their families as well as maintain the integrity of democratic processes.

“The rise in threats and acts of violence aimed at elected officials and government institutions has reached alarming levels,” commented APA President and CEO Dave LaBahn. “Engagement in the political process, from voting to holding public office, forms the very fabric of our society. Violent extremism chills such participation and threatens to de-legitimize government institutions seeking to fulfill their lawful duties.” David Becker, founder and director of the nonpartisan [Center for Election Innovation and Research](#) cautions, “If we get to the point where we cannot believe, or do not believe, that elections are valid, we’re in a very dangerous place for democracy—when people stop accepting the rule of law, violence becomes the next natural stage.”

On May 19-20, 2022, APA hosted a roundtable meeting in Detroit, Michigan that brought together a bipartisan group of prosecutors from Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin, together with federal partners and national experts in political violence. The goal of this meeting was to develop effective prosecutorial strategies for state and local prosecutors to address political violence in their jurisdictions. Kyle Stone, the Stark County Prosecutor in Ohio, explained, “Through bipartisan collaboration with criminal justice stakeholders and authentic community engagement, the report was created to provide practical approaches for state and local prosecutors to build trust with their communities, hold violent actors accountable, and expose the violent ideologies that continue to divide our nation. It seeks to aid prosecutors in shaping policies and practices that hold violent actors accountable and protecting those tasked with maintaining the integrity of our election processes, thereby enhancing trust and legitimacy to the process and those sworn to protect it.” In addition to protecting our election processes, this document highlights ways for government institutions to work together to better track and prevent acts of political violence. This resource will ultimately include multiple case examples and approaches employed throughout the nation that support these recommendations and provide practical application of the policies in action.

Through these recommendations, APA and the Joyce Foundation hope to provide insight into the various methods of addressing political violence and the protection of elected officials and other public servants through monitoring, collaboration, and training. Working together to implement these recommendations is crucial in addressing the threat of political violence and election interference.

[Read the report here.](#)

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