

REMARKS
AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

OF

ALAN R. HANSON
ACTING ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS

AT THE

50-STATE SUMMIT ON PUBLIC SAFETY

ON

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WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you, Suzanne [Brown-McBride]. I'm very pleased to be here – and I'm delighted to be joined by the Deputy Attorney General, whom I'll have the privilege of introducing in just a moment. I also want to thank Doug Hoelscher for joining us from the White House. Mr. Hoelscher, we appreciate your taking the time to be here today.

I'd like to thank Suzanne and her team from the Council of State Governments Justice Center, and Kevin Kempf and his organization – the Association of State Correctional Administrators – for hosting today's summit. And thanks to all our partners for their outstanding work to support state public safety efforts and for their close collaboration with the Office of Justice Programs and the Department of Justice.

It's encouraging to see so many high-level policymakers and justice professionals here, all dedicated to data-driven public safety strategies. Your impressive commitment is matched by your knowledge, your experience and your influence, and we are grateful for the work you are doing, and the leadership you are providing, to keep your states and communities safe.

These two days are a rare opportunity to learn from one another, to identify common challenges and to brainstorm solutions. Our hope is that the lessons shared here, and the discussions you are having with each other over these two days, will provide a framework and an incentive to work for sound, evidence-based policies and practices back home.

We understand that the bulk of that work takes place at the state and local levels. Our role at the federal level is to furnish ideas, to point you to solutions and to guide the exchange of information so that you have the latest and best knowledge about what works to drive down crime.

To that end, I'd like to tell you about a new effort being launched by our Bureau of Justice Assistance in the coming months. With the support of our private partners, BJA will work with state representatives to set up public safety summits like this one in state capitols across the country. Starting early next year, 25 states will be eligible to receive assistance to bring together criminal justice experts, state and local leaders, and other stakeholders to talk about strategies for meeting their criminal justice challenges.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center and the Crime and Justice Institute will work with each of the 25 states to hold a strategy briefing that focuses on state-specific challenges, regional trends and approaches that other states and localities have used to address similar issues. This will be at no cost to participating states.

These summits will also be a pathway for a handful of states to participate in the Justice Reinvestment Initiative. That select subset of states will be able to take advantage of the full complement of technical assistance resources offered by the JRI team.

You can begin the application process now by filling out a short application on your summit mobile app. More information is available in the handouts at the back of the room.

I encourage you all to consider this opportunity. We think it's the ideal way to pursue public safety planning in your jurisdictions. We're excited about it, and we're looking forward to building on and expanding our success under the Justice Reinvestment Initiative.

It's now my privilege to introduce this morning's keynote speaker.

Those of you who had the good fortune to know our Deputy Attorney General as a federal prosecutor know that he has built a distinguished career using effective, strategically sound approaches to fighting crime.

Since his confirmation in April as the second-ranking official in the Department of Justice, he has used his platform to promote data-driven, evidence-based criminal justice policies and practices. His commitment to the safety of our nation's communities is equaled only by our Attorney General's, and he has been a wonderful supporter of our work at the Office of Justice Programs.

It's an honor to have him with us today. Please join me in giving a warm welcome to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.

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