



For Immediate Release

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Washington State Patrol Pledges to Advance Women in Policing

National 30x30 Pledge Aims to Bring More Women into Policing to Improve Public Safety, Community Outcomes, and Trust in Law Enforcement

Olympia, WA - The Washington State Patrol (WSP) has signed on to the 30x30 Pledge – a series of low- and no-cost actions policing agencies can take to improve the representation and experiences of women in law enforcement. These activities are helping policing agencies assess the current state of a department with regard to gender equity, identifying factors that may be driving any disparities, develop and implement strategies and solutions to eliminate barriers, and advance women in policing. These actions address recruitment, assessment, hiring, retention, promotion, and agency culture.

The pledge is the foundational effort of the 30x30 Initiative – a coalition of police leaders, researchers, and professional organizations who are joining to advance the representation and experiences of women in all ranks of policing across the United States. The 30x30 Initiative affiliates with the Policing Project at New York University School of Law and the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives.

The ultimate goal of the 30x30 Initiative is to reach 30 percent of women in police recruit classes by 2030, and to ensure policing agencies are truly representative of the jurisdiction the agency serves. While 30x30 focuses on advancing women in policing, these principles are applicable to all demographic diversity, not just gender.

“We are honored to be among the first in the nation to take this pledge and make this commitment,” said WSP Chief John R. Batiste. “One of my esteemed predecessors was Chief Annette Sandburg, one of the first women to lead a statewide law enforcement agency. She was appointed by then Governor Mike Lowry in 1995. She served until 2000 and later was appointed the head of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration by President George W. Bush.

Chief Batiste added, “This agency and this state have proud histories of women in key positions of leadership and impact. However, as an agency, we are slightly behind the current national average in overall commissioned female representation and are doing all we can to attract, train and retain qualified women for the job. The 30X30 Pledge is something we heartily endorse as it will highlight our public accountability, make us a stronger agency, and help us better serve the public in these times of great challenge and change.”

Currently, women make up 13% of all lieutenant and 15% of all captain positions, but only 10% of the WSP’s overall commissioned personnel. (Over 54% of WSP’s civil service employees are female.) Nationally, women make up 12 percent of sworn officers and 3 percent of police leadership. This underrepresentation of women in policing has significant public safety implications.

Dozens of law enforcement agencies across the nation - from major metro departments including the New York City Police Department, to mid-sized, rural, university and state policing agencies – have signed the 30x30 Pledge. The Pledge is based on social science research that greater representation of women on police forces leads to better policing outcomes for communities with less use of force and less use of excessive force as well as other benefits.

“We are grateful to the Washington State Patrol for being one of the first in the nation to commit to being a part of this growing movement” said Maureen McGough, co-founder of the 30x30 Initiative, Chief of Staff of the Policing Project at the New York University School of Law, and former policing expert at the U.S. Department of Justice. “We believe strongly that advancing women in policing is critical to improving public safety outcomes. We look forward to having more agencies follow WSP’s lead by signing the pledge and improving the representation and experiences of women in policing.”

For more information, visit www.30x30initiative.org.