



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

317 South Patrick Street. ~ Alexandria, Virginia ~ 22314-3501
(703) 549-0775 ~ (800) 322-NAPO ~ Fax: (703) 684-0515
www.napo.org ~ Email: info@napo.org

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NAPO Calls on United Teachers of Los Angeles to Condemn Posting of “Blue Lives Murder” Post by Board Member

United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) posted a picture of Secondary Vice President Julie Van Winkle wearing a shirt that said “Blue Lives Murder” on its Instagram account. While it has since taken it down, the UTLA stands by Ms. Van Winkle and accuses those who condemned the post of trying to deter the fight for Black Lives. That is simply a tactic to avoid responsibility for its inappropriate actions. NAPO calls on the UTLA to retract its statement in support of Ms. Van Winkle and own up to the fact that they are being irresponsible in posting and supporting such inflammatory imagery and language. Furthermore, it is incredibly inconsiderate to the children of police officers who attend the schools represented by UTLA.

UTLA is fanning the flames against law enforcement and not offering anything constructive to the discussion around policing reform by calling police murderers. The actions and words of the UTLA are dangerously misguided. By supporting such language, it is only instilling hatred and fear of law enforcement into students and not exemplifying how real change can be affected.

We, as rank-and-file officers, support improving policing practices and we believe there are many areas where we can come together to address the need for greater transparency, accountability, and training in law enforcement. However, it is near impossible to come together to make these necessary changes when every officer is being lambasted as a murderer.

We know there is an urgent need for better housing, health care, jobs creation and social services in marginalized communities. That does not mean that the vital services for protection of life and property that police provide are not necessary. We need good, effective, ethical and vigorous enforcement of just laws. We also need greater job opportunities, better schools, better access to mental health care and renewed infrastructure. We should be working together to demand both.

The UTLA, however, is not willing to do that. With such posts on social media, it is pretending to fight for justice while doing nothing constructive. Further, the hypocrisy of the UTLA in condemning police unions for representing their membership, as required by law, is incredible.

Today, officers are working in an untenable environment. They are essential workers in the coronavirus pandemic, putting their health at risk to serve and protect their communities. They are working double shifts and overtime on the front lines as cities and towns across the nation experience daily protests and all too frequent riots. Further, officers in our nation’s largest cities are experiencing significant increases in violent crimes – particularly gun-related crimes – that are straining the resources of departments. They

are doing all this in the face of hatred for the uniform they wear, for the laws they are bound by duty to enforce.

The men and women who serve as law enforcement officers risk their lives every day to ensure our schools, neighborhoods and communities are safe. Children of police officers in schools represented by ULTA are impacted by the stresses of their parent's job and the vitriol directed at their parents for the jobs they do. Teachers should be supporting them and not ostracizing them with such language. UTLA must stop its divisive anti-law enforcement rhetoric, which only promotes a culture that becomes increasingly strident in its calls for violence against officers. Its time for UTLA to grow up and act like the educators it is supposed to represent.

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NAPO is a coalition of police units and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement officers through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, and 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers.