



SHOOTING STRAIGHT

On January 18, I had the honor of participating in a conference at the White House in Washington D.C. It was a homeland security conference with counterterrorism experts and with law enforcement from across the country – including other law enforcement leaders from Minnesota.

The meeting was titled, “State, Local, and Tribal Enforcement: Full Day Conference on Empowering Local Partners to Counter Violent Extremism in the United States.” The purpose was to inform the Administration and interagency partners on best practices, case studies, and strategies to counter violent extremism in the U.S.

At the White House, I had the opportunity to discuss the resources that local law enforcement agencies need when planning to respond and to prevent public safety emergencies – including threats and acts of terrorism. There were discussions with Department of Homeland Security Director Napolitano and U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder.

One of the case studies examined included the recent occurrences in the Twin Cities in which several Somali-Americans left their homes in Minnesota and traveled to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab, an al Qaeda-affiliated terror organization.

I complimented the law enforcement leaders and the community for their efforts in working in partnership with the Somali community in the Twin Cities. A broad coalition of people want to prevent other individuals from becoming radicalized. Many law enforcement leaders from across the country wanted to learn about the case and how law enforcement in Minnesota is responding.

We all know that in the post-911 world; local police, fire, and first responders are on the front lines of a response to a terrorist act. We also know that we are on the front lines of preventing crime and potential threats to homeland security. At the White House conference; federal authorities reiterated what local law enforcement has been saying for years -- community policing and criminal information sharing helps to prevent criminal acts everyday --- and that same system of communication and analysis helps to identify crime that may have a link to a homeland security threat.

I am extremely proud of the men and women of the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office for developing innovative tools and methods to address these challenging new demands. CISA, community policing, and specialized citizen academies are among the programs that other agencies use as model programs to duplicate.

I attended the White House conference as a representative from local law enforcement and also as a representative of the Major County Sheriffs’ Association (MCSA). At the start of 2012, I began my term as president of MCSA. I look forward to sharing more information about MCSA initiatives that will benefit all law enforcement personnel and that will improve public safety.

Click the links above and below this document for the full Shooting Straight!