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**Police Coalition: Training, Not Legislative Restrictions
Better Way to Address Police Shootings**

**Warns Legislation May Be Counterproductive
Raising Threat to Police and Communities**

(Spokesperson Available for Talk Shows and News Interviews)

San Francisco, CA: A coalition of police organizations is urging elected officials across the country to invest more into recruitment, police training, and other resources as a first step to decreasing police shootings.

The United Coalition of Public Safety (UCOPS) said the movement to restrict police behavior working its way through state houses, including in California and Washington, will not solve the problem, but will actually increase crime by having a chilling effect on police response and putting police and their communities in greater danger.

Legislation introduced in the California Legislature would raise the legal threshold of when police officers can fire a service weapon. Nationally, the use of lethal force is now generally allowed when it is deemed "objectively reasonable" in a particular situation.

"We all want fewer shootings in our neighborhoods. As the people on the streets facing dangerous situations daily, police officers know the best way to accomplish that goal is through police training, community education and building relationships," said Daryl Turner, president of UCOPS.

"UCOPS is committed to having the difficult conversations and police need to be part of the solution," said Turner. "Politicians are just looking for easy, high-visibility ideas to say they are addressing concerns. The problem is that tinkering with legal thresholds and making blanket assumptions about situations that vary widely won't work and will place officers at greater risk. Distrust comes from a lack of understanding and communication."

To build trust and safer communities, UCOPS suggests:

- **Education:** Ensure police officers across the country have access to the latest advances in police training and that agencies organize citizen academies with realistic scenarios to educate citizens.
- **Communication:** It's reasonable for citizens to have questions and they need to understand the training that's already in place, and police need to explain the what, why, and how police respond to situations.
- **Resources:** Setting a minimum national standard for an adequate officer-to-citizen ratio, having enough police to meet public safety needs, and having the resources to serve our citizens.

- **Community engagement:** The common goal of having safer communities requires involvement and accountability by all parties -- elected officials, the judicial system, police, and citizens.
- **Prioritizing public safety:** Elected officials must make public safety a higher priority. Today, lawmakers are not investing the resources local communities need to address issues such as mental health, homelessness, youth services, domestic violence, gangs, and gun violence.

"Every shooting is a tragedy and something every police officer strives to avoid," said Turner. "But raising risks to police officers and the citizens they protect is not the answer. We know there are a range of other steps we can and should take, starting with more extensive training, that offer far more promise to reducing the incidences of police shootings."

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The United Coalition of Public Safety works on behalf of law enforcement officers and the communities they serve nationwide to shape strong partnerships and break down communication barriers; building trust through active engagement, honest dialogue, education, and outreach.