



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**April 26, 2018**

Contact: Scott Treibitz  
703.626.1407  
[scott@tricompr.com](mailto:scott@tricompr.com)

## **National Police Group Calls for Fixing Mass. Court System**

### ***Murder of Officer Shows Danger of Freed Violent Criminals***

**San Francisco, CA:** A national coalition of police organizations says "Massachusetts must act without delay to fix a judicial system that allowed" a violent criminal out of jail and able to murder a Yarmouth police officer. In a letter to Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, the group said: "the court system clearly failed and must be held accountable."

Yarmouth Police Officer Sean Gannon was fatally shot April 12 while attempting to arrest Thomas Latanowich for parole violations. Latanowich, who is being held for the murder, had more than 100 prior convictions, including on gun charges and a long history of violence.

Daryl Turner, the president of the national police group, the United Coalition of Public Safety (UCOPS), discussed the incident and letter to the Governor at a conference on policing held in Cambridge, Massachusetts last week.

The murder "has exposed serious flaws in a judicial system that allowed a repeat violent criminal to remain on the street, posing a serious threat to both law enforcement and citizens," wrote Turner in the letter to Governor Baker. It "demonstrates that even the most serious and obvious threats to public safety are too often allowed to walk free."

Police officers put their lives on the line every day, Turner stressed, but "We simply cannot allow flaws in our judicial system to make their work even more dangerous." He noted that murder of Officer Gannon underscored how police officers often fulfill their public safety responsibilities by arresting dangerous criminals, in the case of Latanowich multiple times, only to see courts release them.

Laws and court procedures that allow dangerous criminals out on bail or parole must be carefully examined, Turner said, because they have dire, life-or-death consequences for police officers and the communities they protect.

UCOPS conveyed the sympathy of the police officers it represents to Massachusetts, Gannon's family, and the Commonwealth's law enforcement community. It offered to work with state officials to reform the court system and said it would be working with other states as well.

**###**

*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.*