

Baton Rouge Union of Police

Local 237

For immediate release

We want to express our support for Mayor Holden's steps to end the most tumultuous era ever within the Baton Rouge Police Department. Like Mayor Holden, we are truly disappointed with the lack of leadership exhibited by Chief DeWayne White. As an organization, we attempted to assist and work with him on numerous occasions in an effort to create a safe and secure environment for our citizens.

Despite our best efforts, last year violent crime statistics rose and total arrests fell. We believe that this is directly related to decisions made by Chief White. A decrease in violent crime occurred in the last quarter of 2012 due to District Attorney Moore, Mayor Holden, and Sheriff Gautreaux's Brave initiative and the work done by the BPRD BRAVE unit on the streets, despite the lack of leadership and positive direction from the Chief of Police.

In the last election, mayoral candidates and constituents both identified violent crime as the number one problem facing our city. We agree with them. Rather than work with us to address this issue, Chief White chose to publicly attack our organization and its members without provocation in an attempt to shift the blame for the failure of his leadership. He has singled out the Union President and ignored the Baton Rouge Police Department's policies and procedures that led to our department receiving the highest national accreditation. If politics have been injected into the Baton Rouge Police Department, it is Chief White who has done so.

On multiple occasions, with the assistance of Mayor Holden, we attempted to privately mediate the hostilities created by Chief White within our department. Despite our differences, we never spoke adversely about him in public, nor did we ever encourage others to do so. Chief White created this environment by refusing to treat all in an equal manner, making irrational decisions without the facts to support same and creating an environment that severely affected departmental morale. Ultimately, this festered into an openly hostile climate where Chief White alienated himself from the vast majority of officers from all ranks of the Baton Rouge Police Department.

We are very pleased to start a new era in law enforcement within the Baton Rouge Police Department. As we have with every previous Police Chief, we pledge our full support to whoever the next police chief is. We are confident that the next police chief will endeavor to provide a

secure living and working environment for our citizens while maintaining an equitable working environment that addresses all issues in accordance with state law and departmental policy.

We would like to commend our members for their professionalism during this trying time. We are seeing unprecedented unity and support among the men and women of the BRPD, and strong support from many in the business community. We look forward to continuing to work with the citizens of Baton Rouge and are more determined than ever to strive for continued excellence in our department and a safer city for all of us.

While Chief White knows the statements made by his attorney regarding the Baton Rouge Union of Police and its President were false, we must allow his legal appeal to follow its due course without further comment at this time.

President Chris Stewart

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