



March 30, 2023

Karin Underwood
Office of Science and Technology Policy
Executive Office of the President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

RE: RFI Response-Criminal Justice Statistics, Document Number: 2023-03260

Dear Ms. Underwood,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and its Justice Task Force, we write in response to the Office of Science and Technology Policy's (OSTP) request for comments (RFI) on Criminal Justice Statistics. The Leadership Conference is a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 230 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States. The Justice Task Force works to ensure that civil and human rights, equal opportunity, and democratic participation are front and center in criminal legal system policy debates.

We appreciate OSTP's commitment to the full implementation of President Biden's *Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety Executive Order*. We highlight below several reports and resources that are responsive to question 1 of the RFI and which we believe will help improve law enforcement data collection in the United States.

First, The Leadership Conference has long been committed to transparent governance and recognizes that good policy is dependent on high quality data. In 2022, we released [“The Need for Improved Federal Civil Rights Data Collection”](#). This report includes recommendations about how data should be collected and used to further the goals of advancing justice and equity and provides examples about how those recommendations apply to particular data collections or issues, which is relevant for OSTP's work to improve law enforcement data collection.

Second, in February 2023, The Leadership Conference and the Project On Government Oversight recently released a report on the status of implementation of the Death in Custody Reporting Act (DCRA), [“A Matter of Life and Death: The Importance of the Death in Custody Reporting Act”](#). This report contains a wide array of recommendations which address specific problems with the current DCRA collection including a lack of standardization related to race and ethnicity collection, open-ended questions, forms changing frequently and thus negatively impacting the possibility of longitudinal research into preventable deaths. The recommendations in

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this report can inform federal actions that can make it easier for police departments, jails, and prisons to meaningfully collect and report data on deaths in custody.

Third, in 2019, The Leadership Conference published a robust report that is still relevant today, for police department use, called [“A New Era of Public Safety”](#). Chapter 8 of this report covers recommendations and best practices for departments on how to develop robust, community-informed policies and practices around data, information, and video footage.

Finally, The Leadership Conference has developed [Accountable Now](#), a template for a national law enforcement database that is available to the public and provides access to both raw data and analyzed data from police departments. As part of the project, NORC at the University of Chicago, in collaboration with The Leadership Conference has developed [a comprehensive list of use of force categories and definitions](#) that could be used to standardize use of force collection nationally.

We urge you to utilize these resources, in addition to the recommendations provided by other civil rights and government accountability organizations in response to the RFI, as you consider ways to improve law enforcement data collection. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any additional questions please contact Bree Spencer, Interim Senior Program Director, Justice, at spencer@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,



Jesselyn McCurdy
Executive Vice President for Government Affairs