

3rd Letter to the Citizens of the Antelope Valley and Beyond

Hello,

Recent events have once again compelled me to write about serious issues within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Things can not continue the way they are. We work multiple overtime shifts a week, often only getting a couple hours of sleep between continuous double shifts. We are frequently required to work overtime on our days off, and requests for time off to be with family are denied due to lack of staffing and straining relationships. We frequently see violence and horrors beyond comprehension, like a Lancaster man who recently beat his own children to death.

The workload and stress alone would be enough to dishearten people, but there is more. Sheriff Luna, his command staff, and DA Gascon push for leniency toward criminals. But when it comes to us, they seek maximum punishment toward Deputies, potentially including termination and criminal charges, for even the smallest violations of department policy. This has created hesitancy for many to perform their duties.

The fact that our leadership sides with criminals and their advocates, while condemning its own understaffed and overworked Deputies, has come into painful focus in the last few months. On September 16th, Deputy Ryan Clinkunbroomer was murdered right outside his station. Luna didn't attempt to argue with the mercenary DA Gascon for maximum punishment. He didn't even bother to learn how to pronounce his last name correctly for the funeral. His uninspired words at the funeral brought no solace to us, and many of Clink's partners weren't even granted adequate time off to grieve. Additionally, certain members of Luna's command staff were visibly too proud and stiff necked to even bow their heads to show respect for our fallen partner during the funeral. If only the sense of loss and disrespect ended there.

On October 10th, a mobile range trailer outside of North County Correctional Facility exploded, trapping two Deputies inside a hellish inferno. They are still clinging to life but will be irrevocably scarred with massive burns and lung damage. Next to that old trailer sat a new unused range trailer. Unused because it required the installation of a different power outlet for the new equipment. The cost estimate of \$25,000 to install a new outlet for the updated trailer was deemed an unnecessary expense until it was too late.

Most recently, on November 6th, two current department members and one retired Lancaster Deputy took their own lives. The very next day, another Deputy took his own life as well, bringing the total number of LASD suicides this year to nine. The law enforcement suicide awareness group "Blue H.E.L.P." reports that 86 officers across the country have taken their own lives this year. This means LASD suicides alone account for 10% of known law enforcement suicides in the United States for 2023 so far!

For the most part, the Sheriff's Department response to all of these tragedies and travesties has been generic emails with bromides about seeking help and listing a few hotline phone numbers. Luna did stop at Lancaster Station on November 6th and very briefly spoke about the three suicides that day. However, Deputies knew the actual reason he stopped at the station was because he landed at the station helipad on his way to meet with a group that encourages anti-Deputy sentiment in our community. Another slap in the face in the wake of more loss.

The lack of awareness in the upper echelon of LASD is truly astounding. They seemingly don't understand or care that their actions, and in-actions, are causing people to leave the department in droves; or worse, pushing people past their breaking point. The department itself is exhausting its Deputies in body, mind, and even soul.

Changes must be made. As your first responders, we tend to shy away from showing our vulnerabilities to the people we're supposed to help, but I'm asking on behalf of my partners. I believe a show of public support for LASD Deputies can help us now. We need your voices. If you're concerned about any or all of these issues:

Contact your local city councils.

Call the L.A. County Board of Supervisors at 213-974-1411

Call Sheriff's Information Bureau at 213-229-1850

Call Assemblyman Tom Lackey's office at 661-267-7636

Call Representative Mike Garcia's office at 661-568-4855

Please copy and share this message with others.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and God bless,

Just a Deputy