



Position Paper

LAW ENFORCEMENT ON TRIBAL LANDS

Adopted April 8, 2001

by

California State Sheriffs' Association Board of Directors
(Tribal Issues Committee
Sheriff Bill Kolender, Chair)

PREAMBLE

California State Sheriffs' Association (CSSA) recognizes and respects the sovereignty of the 108 federally recognized Indian tribes in the state of California. In addition, CSSA recognizes the rights of all citizens in the great state of California to equal protection and service under the law. The sheriffs of CSSA are committed to working with all citizens and visitors in California's counties to ensure their rights to peace, safety and tranquility.

POSITION

- *CSSA encourages all local governments and tribal governments in California seeking enhanced law enforcement services to consult and work with their local sheriff to form partnerships to effectively and efficiently provide needed services.*

History has demonstrated that effective local law enforcement is accomplished by police agencies and sheriffs' departments developing and maintaining partnerships with the communities they serve; indeed, the community is recognized as the first line of defense in controlling crime and reducing the fear of becoming crime victims. In areas where population and resources are scarce, law enforcement agencies have struggled to provide adequate levels of service. As a proactive response to such conditions, sheriffs have entered into specific contracts and cooperative agreements (i.e., with cities, special improvement districts, Indian tribes, etc.), to provide and enhance law enforcement services. Contracting has proven to be an effective and efficient method of providing low-cost, high-quality law enforcement services, while

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at the same time shielding the recipient entities from the costly liability associated with these services.

- *CSSA does not oppose individual sheriffs from deputizing tribal police officers as long as all persons deputized by the sheriff of a county are certified as peace officers in the state of California.*
- *CSSA does not oppose state peace officer status for tribal police officers as long as tribal police departments and officers strictly conform to all existing laws and POST regulations regarding peace officer eligibility, hiring and retention practices, training and educational certifications and liability exposure to the same extent as state and local entities of government.*

History has documented the need to carefully regulate the policing of America. With over one hundred years of experience and sustained vigilance in this area, California has been a leader among states to establish very restrictive and necessary laws and regulations to regulate the existence and conduct of law enforcement officers and agencies within the state. Any attempt to establish other than existing standard criteria for the granting and exercise of police powers to any group or individual in the state would represent a callous disregard for the safety of the public, condone disparate treatment for one sector of the population and present a dangerous challenge to the delicate balance of public trust in government.

CSSA is committed to the continuous pursuit of excellence in law enforcement in the state of California and will continue to research new methods and promote dialogue and idea exchange in furtherance of this goal.