

Hennepin County Sheriff's Federal Legislative Agenda 2024



Sheriff Dawanna Witt has forged historic partnership with federal, state and local agencies to improve public safety in Hennepin County in 2023. Sheriff Witt's 2024 federal legislative priorities focus on giving law enforcement the tools to effectively serve our communities and address nationwide public safety threats such as gun violence and fentanyl poisoning.

Technology Advancement, Enhancement, and Transparency

- Appropriate funds for forensic science lab equipment at the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office nationally accredited lab to quickly and effectively solve gun cases, which increased sharply between 2020 and 2022
- Invest in forensic science lab personnel, who will help clear backlog of cases caused by the increase in gun violence
- Ensure key law enforcement tools, like facial recognition software, also protect individual rights and require transparency in policy disclosure

Focus on Fentanyl

- Support law enforcement efforts to investigate fentanyl trafficking through the Community Oriented Policing Services program
- Support a bill requiring social media companies report illicit fentanyl activity occurring on their platforms to law enforcement

Compassionate and Effective Community Safety Improvements

- Support continuity of care for justice-involved individuals through Substance Use Disorder System Reform (Medicaid 1115 Waiver)
- Ensure cross-jurisdictional task forces have necessary operating resources to attract and retain participation from agencies of all sizes
- Invest in youth programs that are proven to steer kids away from crime and towards productive and safe choices

Recruitment and Retention

- Fund employee wellness programs provided by local law enforcement agencies through federal assistance grants
- Increase access to mental health, substance use and counseling services for first responders