



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OURAY COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES SHARE MESSAGE OF UNITY DURING TUMULTUOUS TIMES

Ouray County, Colo - The Ouray County Sheriff's Office, the Town of Ridgway Marshal's Office and the City of Ouray Police Department have been working closely with other law enforcement agencies to plan and coordinate for any protests or demonstrations related to the recent elections and the presidential transition. There are currently no known planned protests in Ouray County, nor is there any intelligence indicating planned potential threats or disruptions. We will continue to work with our state and federal partners to closely monitor this.

The allied law enforcement agencies of Ouray County are deeply committed to ensuring the constitutional rights guaranteed to all citizens. The right of the people to freedom of speech, to **peaceably** assemble, and to petition the government are enshrined in the Bill of Rights, and we in law enforcement are sworn to protect and ensure that these freedoms are enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately, we as a country have seen violent protests, threats to individuals and property and the denial of access to public property by the general public by mobs of rioters. Worse, we have seen this behavior tolerated if not condoned by the affected local governments. The abdication of lawful government authority to stop, control and prevent these illegal riots served only to prolong them and encourage those who would commit unlawful acts, and resulted in innocent citizens being denied the ability to enjoy their own rights and freedoms.

Be assured that this will not be the case in Ouray County. We encourage everyone to lawfully exercise all of their freedoms and rights. But no tolerance will be given to anyone or any group that engages in violence. Vandalism, arson, assault or threats of assault, trespassing and inciting riots are **not** rights, they are crimes. And they will be treated as such.

We are honored to be entrusted with the duty of providing for the general public safety, and we are committed to providing fair and equitable police services to all of Ouray's citizens and visitors.

Justin Perry, Ouray County Sheriff

Shane Schmaltz, Ridgway Town Marshal

Jeff Wood, Ouray City Police Chief