



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 13, 2024

AMERICAN SHERIFF ALLIANCE ISSUES CALL FOR ACTION AGAINST TREN DE ARAGUA

*Leadership from the nation's sheriffs' associations demands attention to the threat this
Venezuelan-based gang poses to public safety in communities across America*

Last week, law enforcement across the country was notified that the Venezuelan-based gang, Tren de Aragua (TDA), had issued a “green light” to its members to attack and fire upon U.S. law enforcement officers. The gang, which originated in the Venezuelan prison system, boasts a membership of over 5,000 members and many have made their way into the United States. Members of TDA have been linked to violent crimes across the country, including the recent arrest of an individual in Denver linked to a brutal beating of a jewelry store owner during an armed robbery which occurred on June 24th.

TDA participates in human smuggling and trafficking, kidnapping, extortion schemes, and moving illicit narcotics in their areas of operation. Since U.S. Customs and Border Protection had its first apprehension of a TDA member in March 2023, there have been 70 additional apprehensions within the United States. The total number of TDA members operating in the United States is unknown due to the number of “got-a-ways” entering the country, as well as those who may have been recruited domestically since TDA has showed its presence in the country.

“When we allow a brutal and violent gang, like TDA, to operate in the United States, we have failed in terms of border security,” said Sheriff Kieran Donahue, NSA President. “TDA is the latest example where failed policies have allowed violent gangs and criminal cartels into our country who subsequently commit heinous acts of violence and cause fear in our communities.”

“While we applaud the efforts of the U.S. Treasury Department for sanctioning TDA and giving them the official designation of a transnational criminal organization (TCO), it is clear due to the threats issued by gang leadership to kill and injure our law enforcement officers across the country that more needs to be done to stymie the flow of members of TDA into the U.S.,” said Megan Noland, Executive Director of Major County Sheriffs of America.

Along with the designation of TDA as a TCO by the U.S. Treasury, the Alliance supports the U.S. State Department decision to offer rewards totaling up to \$12 million for information leading to the arrest of TDA gang leadership.

“The brutal attack that occurred in a jewelry store in Denver is one example of the havoc being caused within our communities by these TDA gang members,” said (Ret.) Sheriff David Brown, Executive Director of the Western States Sheriffs’ Association. “Our membership will continue to monitor activities in the Western part of the United States by TDA and continue to share information with our fellow law enforcement to protect them and keep them safe from their actions.”

“The American Sheriff Alliance issued a call to action in February regarding the fear of violent criminals, cartel members, and those on the Terrorist Screening Database (TSDB),” said (Ret.) Sheriff Clint McDonald, Executive Director of the Southwestern Border Sheriffs’ Coalition as well as the Texas Border Sheriff’s Coalition. “It is evident with the number of TDA members increasing rapidly in our country that we are failing at the border to ensure bad actors are not entering our country for nefarious reasons. Coming to the United States and threatening to kill American law enforcement is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.”

The American Sheriff Alliance is united in trying to find real solutions to the continued issues stemming from all borders in the United States – southern, northern, and maritime. Due to the increase in human smuggling, illicit narcotics, and violent criminals coming across all borders, every county in the United States is now a border county feeling the effects of foreign policy which has not adequately addressed issues with violent gangs and the manufacture and smuggling of fentanyl and other drugs by organized criminal cartels.

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The American Sheriff Alliance consists of sheriffs, leadership, and chief law enforcement officers from the National Sheriffs’ Association, Major County Sheriffs of America, the Western State Sheriffs’ Association, the Southwestern Border Sheriffs’ Coalition, and the Texas Border Sheriff’s Coalition. This alliance was formed to advocate for policy change and reform in order to keep our nation’s citizens safe as well as support the men and women who protect and serve the United States of America.