Good afternoon, Chair Keith, Vice Chair Sullivan, and members of the Commission. It is an extreme honor and a privilege to have been asked to testify to you today.

I am Erik "Bo" Bourgerie, the Director of Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training, or POST. Before becoming the Colorado POST Director, I retired after 20 years of law enforcement service in a smaller, more rural community located at the very top of Colorado's Rocky Mountains.

Colorado POST sets the minimum standards for, and has regulatory oversight over, the 30+ basic, reserve, and refresher law enforcement training academies in the state. Additionally, Colorado POST ensures compliance with in-service training mandates for peace officers, creates online and in-person training, and distributes about $3.8 million in grant funding to Colorado law enforcement agencies annually for peace officer training. POST is also responsible for enforcing statute and POST Rule in issuing, and revoking, peace officer certification.

I am also the 2nd Vice President for the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training, or IADLEST. IADLEST is the premier organization for POST Directors and Directors of law enforcement training academies from around the world.

The basic law enforcement training academies lay the very foundation for a peace officer's career. Done properly, improving training in the academies can help peace officers serve their communities better, and even possibly save agency resources by decreasing the amount of time needed in Field Training programs.

My first recommendation is the creation of national guidance on the use of evidenced based modern adult learning concepts to increase the core competencies required for law enforcement. Today, most law enforcement training is lecture based, which can be appropriate in some instances for teaching basic information. However, this teaching methodology isn't very effective for creating deep understanding with adult learners and it does nothing to develop the core competencies needed by our peace officers, such as critical thinking, emotional intelligence, interpersonal communication, and decision making under stress. This traditional teaching methodology is failing our peace officers and crime victims. How can we reasonably expect our new peace officers to treat victims of domestic violence with the care and compassion they deserve, if the first time they are experiencing the emotions and complexity of these situations is when they are in the field? In the best-case scenario, the new peace officer is still in the FTO program with an experienced trainer to guide them. In the worst-case scenario, especially likely

in our small and rural jurisdictions, their first domestic violence call may come when they are on their own, with backup an hour away.

Instead, we can better prepare our peace officers by using facilitated discussions to increase their depth of knowledge, problem-based learning to enhance critical thinking, and realistic scenarios to develop emotional intelligence and increase interpersonal communication skills, among other methods. Making the scenarios as realistic as possible is key. Providing immediate feedback allows recruits to learn and grow. In the traditional lecture learning environment, topic areas are almost always covered in blocks. Using 50 to 60% scenario based education, de-escalation can be used to varying degrees in every scenario, instead of just comprising a two or four hour block of instruction. Similarly, mental health, both for the community at large and for our peace officers, can be woven into nearly every instructional topic. Interpersonal communication would become a skill practiced daily, with experts providing feedback on its effectiveness.

I firmly believe that if law enforcement is provided a tool, or a resource, they will use it. One of the major hurdles for academies, or law enforcement agencies, nationally from adopting these evidence based instructional methodologies is a lack of understanding, and a lack of expertise in effectively creating this type of training. That is why national guidance on these methodologies, and their importance, is so vital. This guidance should contain a blueprint on how to develop and implement these types of courses, as well as examples of possible scenarios, grading forms, actor scripts, and other associated documents.

My second recommendation is the creation of a national training grant available to law enforcement training academies to implement and deliver these training concepts, as well as to improve and/or create training facilities. Unfortunately, these types of trainings are much more resource intensive than lecture-based instruction. Non-law enforcement actors are needed to follow specific, but variable, scripts during the scenarios. Props are an essential part of the training. And realistic training environments are needed. While the FBI's Hogan's Alley is the gold standard, it is entirely possible to retrofit defunct schools as law enforcement training facilities, like the Frank DeAngelis Center for Community Safety in Jefferson County, CO. Or, abandoned big box stores could be purchased to have mock apartments or houses built inside. These facility improvements could also act as regional training hubs, helping local law enforcement by providing them the ability to access these facilities. Not having a location to train is another substantial hurdle to the implementation of adequate training.

The third recommendation is that a scientific based study be conducted to assess the effectiveness of these instructional methodologies and their impact on crime rates, uses of force, complaints leveled against peace officers, internal affair investigations, retention, and termination rates. While we know that these instructional methodologies are the most effective when teaching adult learners, we do not know the impacts they may have on law enforcement. It is vitally important to validate the overall impact that these newer instructional methodologies have on law enforcement so that we can learn how to improve upon them.

Fourth, I recommend that a national job task analysis be completed in order to ascertain topics of common interest for law enforcement training academies across the nation. Job task analyses inform POST organizations and training academies on where their efforts should be focused to produce successful peace officers. Identifying national common areas of interest

would allow for the creation of standardized lesson plans for these topics that POSTs or academies could use, freeing up efforts and resources that could be directed elsewhere.

Lastly, I recommend a change in the verbiage of 28 CFR 20.3(b) to include the certification of peace officers as part of the definition of Administration of criminal justice. Who attends law enforcement training academies, or enters the law enforcement profession, is of vital importance to not just law enforcement, but to our communities. The gate keepers, POST organizations, are currently denied access to certain types of CJIS records, creating a needless barrier to preventing bad actors from becoming, or remaining, peace officers.

Thank you to the Commission for the excellent work you are doing for law enforcement, our communities, and this nation. I will be available for any questions.