

Good morning and welcome. I'm delighted to see all of you here today and I am more delighted still to have the honor of welcoming the 86th Attorney General of the United States, the Honorable Merrick Garland to the District of Rhode Island.

Mr. Attorney General, the group that you see around the table here today is really reflective of the incredibly close and effective partnerships federal, state, and local that characterize our law enforcement work here in Rhode Island. With a relentless focus on what gets results, rather than who gets credit.

I am tremendously proud of the work that we have done in collaboration in so many critical areas relative to public safety. I think particularly about the use of federal law enforcement intelligence, to drive prosecution of fentanyl, which has had such devastating effects on the overdose crisis here in the Ocean State. The use of similar intelligence to combat gun crime, whether those cases are prosecuted on the state side or on the federal side, and our white-collar work to combat elder fraud, romance scams; the things that touch the lives of every-day Rhode Islanders; as well as corporate crime that hopefully will change behavior both locally and across the country.

We are geographically small, but we punch well above our weight because of these partnerships, and I am proud of that. And to our law enforcement colleagues, let me say that these partnership function effectively in no small part with the support we get from Washington. And we have been incredibly fortunate to have an AG with an unrelenting focus on attacking the drivers of violent crime in this country and providing us with the resources locally that we need. And it truly is a great honor to welcome him to the district. Mr. Attorney General, the floor is yours.