



# BENTON COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF'S GUILD

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GUILD VOTES IN FAVOR OF RECALLING BENTON COUNTY SHERIFF, JERRY HATCHER**

KENNEWICK, Washington – The Benton County Deputy Sheriff's Guild (BCDSG) has overwhelmingly voted, in that far greater than 90 % of the total membership voted unanimously to recall Benton County Sheriff, Jerry Hatcher. There was not a single "no" vote.

In the last few weeks, the members of The Benton County Deputy Sheriff's Guild members have been presented with facts to apply to the legal standard set out in RCW 29A.56.110 relating to recalling of an elected official. This required that the Body of the Guild conclude that Sheriff Hatcher committed acts that were either malfeasance, misfeasance, and/or a violation of his oath of office.

Recently, the Body of the Guild was provided a great deal of information, to include a letter from Fmr. Benton County Sheriff's Commander, Tom Croskrey, as well as several other documents, including a report by investigator Ms. Blatt, an independent investigator hired by Benton County to investigate actions by Sheriff Hatcher. Ms. Blatt's investigation related to actions that were reported by a Whistleblower employee alleging that Sheriff Hatcher violated the Benton County Anti-Discrimination, Harassment policy, and engaged in other actions in violation of the law.

Ms. Blatt's April 24, 2020 report found that Sheriff Hatcher committed retaliatory actions against the reporting whistleblower employee, that he engaged in anti-union activity, and retaliated against two Whistleblower witnesses.

Former Benton County Sheriff's Commander Tom Croskrey provided information to the Guild, upon his recent voluntary resignation, relating to Sheriff Hatcher's mental state, and the Sheriff's admissions to alleged criminal activity from the Fall of 2019 when several news articles were released relating to physical assaultive actions against his current estranged wife. Additionally, Fmr. Commander Tom Croskrey himself was interviewed as witness in allegations relating to Sheriff Hatcher misappropriating county property and/or funds and had been threatened during this process by Sheriff Hatcher.

Four months ago, the BCDSG then came together for a vote of no confidence. On February 2, 2020, the BCDSG sent a letter to the community through the media expressing a vote of no confidence against Sheriff Jerry Hatcher. On February 3, 2020 Sheriff Hatcher responded to the letter through various interviews with the local news outlets stating that he believed it was "a *small nucleus* of people within the sheriff's office that feel

this way,” as quoted in the Tri-City Herald. The vote of no confidence did not come from a “small nucleus” of individuals. An overwhelming majority of BCDSG members voted a “no confidence” in Sheriff Hatcher February 2020.

The BCDSG members voting in these decisions are the men and women who trusted Sheriff Hatcher to lead them and be a beacon of light in times of darkness. These Benton County Deputy Sheriff’s Guild members are Sheriff Hatcher’s Patrol Deputies, Detectives, Corporals, Sergeants and Lieutenants. It is unfortunate that the decisions Sheriff Hatcher has made brought these individuals together to stand united in voting for Sheriff Hatcher to be recalled from his position.

The vote to have Sheriff Hatcher be petitioned for recall was cast because The Benton County Deputy Sheriff’s Guild, believe with conviction that Sheriff Hatcher is not fit to be the leader of The Benton County Sheriff’s Office.

Since February of 2020, the executive board for the BCDSG has attempted to converse with Sheriff Hatcher through the proper channels, but he has passed his shortcomings onto his employees while refusing to have a productive conversation.

It has been four and one-half months since the BCDSG, shared the vote of “no confidence” with the Benton County community and Sheriff Hatcher. Since that vote’s passing, nothing productive has been forthcoming from Sheriff Hatcher.

Unfortunately, it became apparent within last eight months that Sheriff Hatcher will engage in any level of deception, falsehood, and commit what appear to be crimes. Furthermore, he will harass employees if he believes it will secure a victory for a second term. Sheriff Hatcher does not deserve a second term as The Benton County Sheriff and we strongly believe he is not deserving of finishing his first.

An important topic among the current events involving Law Enforcement is that good cops are not speaking out against the bad ones.

We as a Guild sympathize with this narrative and want the community to know that the BCDSG has gone through the proper channels to speak out against an alleged criminal leading the Sheriff’s Office and we have received no support or response from the County Administration. There has been zero direction on how the County Administration plan to move forward against the evidence supporting the allegations that Sheriff Hatcher has committed several crimes and civil infractions.

Because of the lack of action by County Administration, we as the Benton County Deputy Sheriff’s Guild chose to approach the media as the medium to deliver, you the community, the information we have come to learn.

The BCDSG is standing up and speaking out with the hopes that you are reading this will listen. Be assured that the Deputies you encounter will continue to do their best to provide the upmost safety and security within the community.

Throughout the course of the petition to recall Sheriff Hatcher, a number of documented evidences will come to be public knowledge and our only hope is that after learning what we already know, you will join our fight in recalling Sheriff Hatcher.

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