

# **MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS**



## **Policy Statement**

### **News Media Coverage of Mass Shootings**

#### **Preface**

Mass shootings have been increasing in recent years. A September 2014 report by the FBI indicated that mass shootings have increased significantly since 2007 in the United States. In the period 2000 to 2006 there was an average of 6.4 a year; from 2007 to 2013 the average increased to 16.4 shootings a year.<sup>1</sup> The causes and solutions to this growing problem are complex but some experts believe that one motivation is the notoriety of these killers inspires others. “Researchers at Texas State University have found that many of the shooters are partially motivated by fame and have looked to past shooters for inspiration”.<sup>2</sup> The FBI has launched a “Don’t Name Them Campaign.” Victims from nine mass shootings have launched a “No Notoriety” campaign that challenges the news media to limit using the suspects name and photo in coverage after they are in custody.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Policy Positions**

- The news media should minimize the use of the name and photograph of a mass shooting suspect in their coverage of the incident after the initial identification and the suspect is in custody.
- MCCA supports the efforts of the FBI and “No Notoriety” to educate the news media that shooters are partially motivated by fame and receive inspiration from past shooters.
- MCCA members should encourage their local news media to limit the use of a mass shooter’s name and photo in their coverage.

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<sup>1</sup> Journalist’s Resource. “Mass murder, Shooting sprees and rampage violence: Research roundup”. June 18, 2015 <http://journalistsresource.org/studies/government/criminal-justice/mass-murder-shooting-sprees-and-rampage-violence-research-roundup>

<sup>2</sup> Gerber, T. “FBI to Media: Don’t Name Mass Shooters”, KSAT 12 News July 28, 2014. <http://www.ksat.com/content/pns/ksat/news/2014/07/28/fbi-to-media--don-t-name-mass-shooters.html>

<sup>3</sup> No Notoriety. <http://nonotoriety.com>