



February 14, 2025

Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored to write this letter of recommendation for Terrance Cole in support of his candidacy for the position of Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). With over 30 years of experience in federal, state, and local law enforcement, Terrance brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the table. As the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security for the Commonwealth of Virginia, Terrance has demonstrated extraordinary leadership by overseeing 11 state agencies, including the Virginia State Police and the Virginia Department of Corrections. His ability to manage large teams, with over 19,500 employees and an annual budget of \$5.4 billion, speaks to his organizational skills and capability to execute large-scale operations.

During his tenure with the DEA, including his role as Assistant Regional Director in Mexico City, Terrance's accomplishments were nothing short of remarkable. His efforts in leading multinational drug enforcement operations contributed to the reduction of drug trafficking and narco-terrorism, significantly enhancing U.S. national security. Terrance's fluency in Spanish and deep understanding of international law enforcement enabled him to foster critical relationships with agencies across the globe, including Mexican law enforcement, military officials, and intelligence partners. His leadership and ability to navigate complex, high-pressure environments resulted in the successful execution of large-scale investigations, asset seizures, and international collaborations, all while ensuring the safety of U.S. assets and citizens.

What truly sets Terrance apart is his commitment to results. Under his guidance, the Commonwealth of Virginia has made significant strides in addressing pressing public safety concerns. Through initiatives such as the Violent Crime Reduction Strategy, Virginia has seen an 18% decrease in violent crime. Additionally, his leadership in combatting the fentanyl epidemic through Operation FREE Virginia led to a 22% reduction in fentanyl poisonings and the seizure of over 550 pounds of fentanyl in a 45-day operation. These accomplishments reflect Terrance's ability to take action, implement effective policies, and collaborate across agencies to drive meaningful outcomes.

Beyond his tactical expertise, Terrance is a visionary leader who is committed to fostering a culture of preparedness, resilience, and collaboration. His ability to develop and execute strategic plans, as seen with the establishment of the Virginia State Police's Homeland Security Bureau, is a testament to his forward-thinking approach and dedication to long-term public safety objectives.

In summary, Terrance Cole is a proven leader whose vast experience in law enforcement, exceptional strategic thinking, and unwavering dedication to public service make him an ideal candidate for the role of Administrator of the DEA. I am confident that his leadership will continue to make a profound impact on the agency, as well as on the safety and security of our nation.

In conclusion, currently I serve in the position of Executive Director for the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators. I have served over 42 years in law enforcement, 21 of those years as chief of police. During my career I have held leadership roles to include President of New Jersey State Chiefs of Police and President of International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) this has allowed me to work with local, state, federal and international leaders.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions regarding his qualifications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul M. Cell".

Paul M. Cell
Executive Director
IACLEA