To the Citizens of Colorado,

On February 14 the Denver Police Department's Memorial to the officers who have gave the ultimate sacrifice citizens of Denver and Colorado was vandalized during an anti-law enforcement protest.  This despicable act shocked the conscience of the citizens and law enforcement community across Colorado.

Sadly, this crime was allowed to be committed in the presence of Denver police officers who were under orders from Chief Robert White to take no action.  Not only did Chief White prevent officers from protecting the memorial as it was being damaged, he also failed to take reasonable preventative steps such as posting officers around it to preserve the sanctity of this place of remembrance for the families and friends of these Colorado heroes.  Chief White should have anticipated this vandalism to this Colorado monument as the State Capital was vandalized in a previous protest.  Common sense dictates that targets such as the State Capital and Denver Police Memorial Wall be protected during an anti-police demonstration.

The demonstrated lack of leadership by Chief White, a veteran officer who has been chief in other major departments, is inexcusable.

In addition to failing to address the vandalism of the memorial, additional examples of Chief White’s poor leadership include his premature and conclusive statements made immediately after the shooting death of Ofc. Celena Hollis, whose name also appears on the memorial wall, and his comments made right after Ofc. John Adsit was run over and grievously injured (along with three other Denver officers).  His statements that the suspect “didn’t intend to shoot Ofc. Hollis” and “a medical emergency caused the accident” were, inexplicably, made as the investigations were just getting underway.  These comments demonstrated extremely poor judgment and could have had a chilling effect on the prosecution of these critical cases.

These premature statements minimizing the role of the people involved in the both the murder and serious injury of Denver officers, combined with allowing the criminal desecration of the memorial, casts doubt on Chief White’s ability to effectively lead the 1,400 officers of the Denver Police Department.

Although Chief White’s direction to the officers of the Denver Police Department is to prevent crime before it occurs, his inaction speaks more loudly than his words.  To prevent crime before it occurs you must have a clear vision and the ability to credibly direct the men and women of the department to act on this vision.  In this respect Chief White has failed.

The officers of the Denver Police Department recognize that the vast majority of citizens support law enforcement and recognize the key role police officers play in preserving the quality of life we enjoy in our great city and state.  In that spirit we would like to invite Governor Hickenlooper, Mayor Hancock, members of the Denver City Council, citizens of Denver and all of Colorado, and law enforcement officers throughout the state to come celebrate the lives of the heroes whose names are engraved on the same memorial that Chief Robert White allowed to be desecrated.   The Lest We Forget vigil will be held at the Denver Police Memorial, 1331 Cherokee St on Saturday February 21st at noon.

Respectfully,

The men and women of the Denver Police Department