**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FOR INFORMATION**

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**ESSEX COUNTY SHERIFF PART OF WASHINGTON POST’S**

**“ADDICTION IN AMERICA: ON THE FRONT LINES”**

 Boston, Massachusetts… The Washington Post series “Addiction in America: On The Front Lines” came to Boston on Feb. 23rd to focus on the opioid crisis in New England.  Sheriff Kevin F. Coppinger joined Governor Charles Baker, Boston Mayor Martin Walsh and other elected officials, medical experts and advocates who are on the front lines of combating the opioid epidemic.

“I was honored to be asked to participate in this important series. The solution to the opioid crisis we face must be a collaborative effort. There is no one answer but by working together and sharing best practices we are making progress,” said Sheriff Coppinger.

The event presented panels moderated by Washington Post correspondents to discuss the problem from law enforcement, medical and community perspectives. Sheriff Coppinger discussed the effectiveness of the male and female detox programs offered at the Essex County Correctional Facility. While emphasizing the importance of follow-up programs and resources for inmates as they are released back to the community.  Patient advocates and community leaders shared stories of hope and resilience and offered workable options to support both addicts and the families of those struggling with addiction.

A major focus of the “Addiction in America: On the Front Lines” event was to discuss how each leader’s efforts needed to collaborate with others for more effective outcomes.

The New England region has been among the hardest hit by the nation’s opioid crisis. According to statistics released by the public health officials, in 2016 the number of opioid related deaths increased in every New England state.

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