



Your Turn: Thank police and prosecutors for crime drop

Jason T. Ellis Published 12:02 p.m. ET March 14, 2018

A [Your Turn](#) was recently submitted by Jason Garnar, stating, "Prior to my taking office, Broome County had the highest crime rate in the state. That has now been cut by 16 percent." While Mr. Garnar is entitled to his own opinion, he is not entitled to his own facts.

The crime statistics Garnar is citing are from the [16 percent reduction in crime in 2016](#), before he took office as county executive.

In my 23 years in law enforcement, I've worked with some of the bravest and most dedicated men and women in the world. I stood proudly with my fellow sheriff's deputies, and police officers during my 23 years on the job, and I stand proudly with them now. Some of the bravest are no longer with us, because of the great risk that comes with serving and protecting the residents of Broome County. The credit goes to these men and women, not the politicians.

I worked in the District Attorney's Office as chief investigator, for 22 months, before stepping aside to run for sheriff, to help make Broome County even safer. During my time at the DA's office, there was a change in culture, specifically, how drug dealers are prosecuted, and how those addicted to drugs are offered treatment.

At the beginning of 2016, working with Cooperstown Police Chief Mike Covert, one of the most vocal advocates for drug treatment, we were the first DA's office in the country to begin placing drug users in treatment. Since launching Operation SAFE, the DA's office has sent more than 350 drug users to treatment, which has saved lives, and the central reason for the 16 percent drop in crime.

During this time, Broome County law enforcement agencies also came together and busted two of the biggest drug trafficking rings in history. This was done through countless hours of work from police and prosecutors; not politicians.

I know why Broome County is safer today because I've lived it. Police officers make great sacrifices to protect Broome County. And prosecutors often work more than 100 hours a week (even though they're only paid for 37.5 hours) to focus on cases, and bring justice to defendants and victims.

I couldn't be more proud of my fellow police officers, and those I worked with in the DA's office. I'm not proud of politicians who minimize the work of those actually making a difference by trying to steal credit.

Crime is down in Broome County, and that is something to celebrate, but we need to thank police and prosecutors, not politicians.

Jason T. Ellis is a Vestal resident.

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