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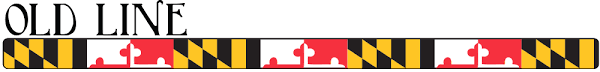
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Statement from Joe Gregory, President, FOP Lodge 82,**

**Towson University Police**

First and foremost, we send thoughts and prayers to the victims of the Sept. 4 shooting at Towson University’s campus. We hope everyone has a speedy recovery.

Since the shooting, we have seen President Kim Schatzel pass the buck in response to the shooting on Towson University’s campus on Sept. 4. Instead of working to bring people together to ensure the safety of Towson University’s students, President Schatzel released a statement suspending a veteran TU police officer for the shooting. The TU Police Department is made up of fully certified sworn law enforcement officers.

I am confident that as the public learns the events of that evening, as well as previous gatherings, the Towson community will see the suspension as an attack on a decorated, veteran officer who was carrying out the orders of the University President, Kim Schatzel and Towson University Police Chief Herring to “stand down” and take no action against the gathering crowd. The record is clear. The officer complied with this order and had the entire on duty shift in close proximity to the crowd to monitor. When the shooting began, the TUPD officers rushed to the scene as the crowd was fleeing to attend to the wounded and search for the suspect. The suspended officer can be heard communicating with responding Baltimore County Police units and attempting to coordinate a response with our fellow officers from Baltimore County. The officers’ actions should be commended by the University and Baltimore County, not condemned and be made a scapegoat for the failure in leadership at Towson University.

Several days before this incident a similar gathering occurred at Towson University and similar orders were given. Towson University leadership knew another gathering may be possible but took no action to prepare for it.

FOP 82 has been pressuring the administration for months, to not only fill open positions, but ensure that the department has adequate resources and plans to handle incidents such as the one we witnessed on Sept. 4. Our hope is that everyone can come together, including the university leadership, the county, the students and staff, and the FOP, to review what happened and make improvements to ensure that one experienced, sworn officer isn’t taking the blame for a lack of leadership by the administration.