

Press Conference Remarks

Wayne Holden

March 17, 2016, 3 p.m.

Good afternoon. I'm Dr. Wayne Holden, president and CEO of RTI International. Thank you for joining us today.

For those of you who may not be familiar with RTI International, we're an independent nonprofit institute that provides research, development, and technical services grounded in scientific rigor. We work on many of the world's most pressing issues.

Our clients rely on us to answer questions that demand an objective and multidisciplinary approach. Working together with our partners, we design and lead projects that consider social, economic, programmatic, and technological factors critical to success.

The work we do gives our clients the results they need—reliable data, thorough analysis, technological innovation, and sustainable programs—to inform public policy and ground practice in evidence for the good of people and communities around the world.

Today you're here to learn more about our traffic stop study in Durham and our soon to be available RTI Traffic Stop Analysis Tool.

Let me start by telling you that the genesis of this work came from a request from the Durham Police Department to examine whether there was racial disproportionality in traffic stops. A lot of organizations would have shied away from knowing the answer to that question. But the Durham Police Department asked us to look critically at their operations.

And we were pleased to bring our research experience to this challenge. Seeing the value it could provide, we made the decision to self-fund the work.

RTI did not receive any outside funding for the study and tool we're discussing today.

As a result of this research, we also are creating an online tool—the RTI Traffic Stop Analysis Tool – that will assist law enforcement agencies around the country in understanding the racial distribution of traffic stops using the Veil of Darkness approach that we used in studying the Durham Police Department. You'll hear more about that shortly.

What I want to leave you with is the idea that there are things as a society that we need to know to improve the lives of citizens in our

community. This is the place for research. And research can have the power to drive positive change.

The tool will be available in a few weeks. It will be free to use in the hopes that law enforcement agencies will be inspired to use it. The Durham Police Department is an example of a law enforcement agency willing to look at the issue of disproportionate minority contact and act on the findings. We commend the Durham Police Department for recognizing a need, asking for research to answer their questions, and now identifying ways to improve.

We're honored to have Chief Larry Smith and Deputy Chief A.R. Marsh here with us today to talk about that. We are also pleased that Durham Mayor Bill Bell and Durham City Manager Thomas Bonfield have joined us today.

Also joining us is Dr. Kevin Strom, director of RTI's Policing, Security and Investigative Science Program, and Dr. Travis Taniguchi, a research criminologist at RTI, who led the research for the report we are discussing today.

And now I will turn things over to Dr. Kevin Strom who will speak to you about how we conducted this research.