



**Open Government Town Hall  
Transparent Policing and Accountable Law Enforcement  
Wednesday January 27<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (EST)**

This January's Town Hall event will bring together openness advocates, and criminal justice proponents to discuss efforts to collect and use data to promote greater accountability in law enforcement. The event will include a panel presentation featuring speakers with a range of experience working to access data, promote criminal justice reforms, and use data at the grassroots level in advocacy campaigns.

The Town Hall will address challenges to criminal justice advocacy work, such as the lack of comprehensive data needed to promote reforms, including data on law enforcement-involved shootings and use-of-force incidents. Journalists and criminal justice proponents have drawn attention to the fact that no comprehensive federal programs exist to comprehensively and uniformly require the reporting of such data. As [reported](#) by the Guardian, even high-profile cases of civilian deaths, such as the case of Tamir Rice and Eric Garner, are missing from the federal government's official record of homicides by officers. This failure is due to the fact that most police departments across the country are either unwilling or unable to submit data on such incidents. This lack of data on policing is a major impediment to justice and accountability for police abuses and a detriment to public trust in law enforcement institutions.

Our panelists will discuss these challenges and other obstacles to their work – and what they have done to confront them. Audience participants are invited to contribute to the discussion on the type of data needed to enhance accountability and advance criminal justice reforms – and are encouraged to bring questions, and to share their own experience with and knowledge about data tied to criminal justice.

**When:** January 27, 2016, 11am – 1pm

**Call-in:** 641-715-3836; **Access code:** 374 736

**Panelists:**

[Kanya Bennett](#) serves as a Legislative Counsel in the ACLU's Washington Legislative Office. In this capacity, Kanya advances criminal justice reform at the federal level. Kanya also co-chairs a law enforcement reform working group and engages in efforts to promote better data collection and reporting by police departments and transparency and accountability when police use force. Ms. Bennett helped develop recommendations for the White House Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing, with the ACLU putting forward a recommendation to collect data on a range of police and citizen encounters – from stops and arrests to nonfatal and fatal police shootings.

[www.OpenTheGovernment.org](http://www.OpenTheGovernment.org)

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[Sakira Cook](#) serves as Counsel in the public policy department of [The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights](#) – a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States. Ms. Cook facilitates the development of a federal policy agenda on reform of the criminal justice system for a broad coalition of civil and human rights groups and monitors, analyzes, and advances current federal civil rights issues and legislation in several areas, law enforcement reform and accountability, sentencing and prison reform, and reentry. Ms. Cook is also co-chair of the law enforcement reform working group of the Justice Roundtable.

[Damian Ortellado](#) is a research analyst at the Sunlight Foundation focusing on criminal justice data research. Damian works on Sunlight’s opening criminal justice data initiative – an effort to amass an inventory of public and privately-produced criminal justice data. Mr. Ortellado has helped compile a spreadsheet that represents the inventory of data collected from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government. The aim of the initiatives is for people to use the research or reporting as well as contribute to growing database.

[Scott Roberts](#) is a Senior Campaign Director of Criminal Justice for Color of Change. Mr. Roberts has collaborated with local grassroots organizations across the country on issues of criminalization. In addition, he led trainings for over 1,000 organizers on school-to-prison pipeline issues over the last 4 years. In 2013, he co-founded Freedom Side, a national network of youth of color organizers focused on racial justice issues.

**Moderator:**

[Patrice McDermott](#) is the Executive Director of OpenTheGovernment.org, and has led the coalition since July 2006. Dr. McDermott is the author of *Who Needs to Know? The State of Public Access to Federal Government Information*. She was inducted into the National Freedom of Information Act Hall of Fame in 2001, and is a frequent speaker on public access and open government issues.

*This event is made possible with the generous support of Bauman Foundation, CS Fund, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Rockefeller Brothers Fund; Scherman Foundation, and SR Mott Foundation (through Philanthropic Ventures Fund)*

**For more information and resources, see:**

[Patrice McDermott: Death toll from violent cops is a guessing game \(USA Today opinion column\)](#)

[OTG: openness advocates and criminal justice groups join call for comprehensive data on police shootings](#)

[Kanya Bennett: Over 100 People Were Killed by Police in March. Have Police Gotten the Post-Ferguson Memo Yet?](#)

[Damian Ortellado: PRIDE Act highlights importance of criminal justice data standards](#)

[Wisconsin Public Radio interview, featuring Sakira Cook and other members of the Leadership Conference](#)

[CBS Chicago: Radio interview featuring Scott Roberts with Color of Change](#)