

# National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives



4609-F Pinecrest Office Park Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22312-1442  
(703) 658-1529 – phone  
(703) 658-9479 – fax  
[www.noblenational.org](http://www.noblenational.org)

## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

Media Contact:  
Dwayne A. Crawford  
NOBLE  
703-658-1529  
dcrawford@noblenatl.org

### **Statement on the Passing of National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) Former National President Chief Willie L. Williams**

*ALEXANDRIA, VA– Today, April 29, 2016, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) National President Gregory Thomas, released the following statement on the passing of former NOBLE National President Police Chief Willie L. Williams:*

“The members of NOBLE are mourning the loss of our dear friend and former National President, Police Chief Willie L. Williams. Williams served as NOBLE's national president from 1991-1992 and devoted his tenure to improving the career prospects of young African American officers. He worked tirelessly to win directorships for African Americans over federal law enforcement agencies. For many in his community Williams was an inspiration and proof that inner-city children who lived in a world of crime and poverty can improve themselves and their communities.

“In the days and weeks following the verdict in the Rodney King beating trial, which resulted in riots that left parts of the city in ashes; Williams stepped in and became the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) first black Police Chief. He was a proponent of community policing and accountability and used it to bridge the healing process. Williams had an open door policy and was willing to listen to all sides of the any issues brought to his attention.

“When Willie first joined the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) in the early 1960's there were virtually no career opportunities for African-American officers. He rose through the ranks and was appointed commissioner after the controversial 1985 bombing of the MOVE cult. He ran the Philadelphia Police Department until 1992. In 1996, Williams published **Taking Back Our Streets: Fighting Crime in America**, the book was co-written with Bruce Henderson and discusses Williams' philosophy on community policing. In 2002, Williams was appointed Federal Security Director at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, one of the world's busiest airports. In each and every one of his leadership

roles Williams consistently, in that gentle, and understated way of his, put the interests of the whole ahead of the interests of the individual.

“Chief Willie L. Williams’s legacy challenges us today, as law enforcement executives, to come together and be bridge builders in the communities we serve.

“Willie L. Williams will be missed. My heartfelt condolences go out to his wife Evelina, their family – the children, and grandchildren, in whom he had so much pride – and to the many friends and the communities he served. “[END]

**Note: Chief Willie L. Williams passed away on Tuesday, April 26, 2016.**

### **About the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives**

Since 1976, The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) has served as the conscience of law enforcement by being committed to justice by action. NOBLE represents over 3,000 members internationally, who are primarily African-American chief executive officers of law enforcement agencies at federal, state, county and municipal levels, other law enforcement administrators, and criminal justice practitioners. For more information, visit [www.noblenational.org](http://www.noblenational.org).