

Statement for the Record by
Deputy Commissioner Greg Mays
Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security

Hearing Before the Committee on Homeland Security
United States House of Representatives

“Standing Strong on the Thin Blue Line: How Congress Can Support Local Law Enforcement”

May 15, 2024

Thank you, Chairmen Green, and Ranking Member Thompson for holding this hearing and for the invitation to testify with my fellow law enforcement leaders on some of the critical law enforcement and security issues facing the American Homeland.

The Tennessee Office of Homeland Security is a law enforcement agency with statewide jurisdiction. Our primary mission is to investigate threats to life, threats to our schools, protect our state’s critical infrastructure and major events, and to work with our federal, state, and local partners to prepare for and mitigate any threats to our state. Our Department’s overall mission is to serve, secure, and protect the people of Tennessee. We set about every day to accomplish our mission in several ways:

- Homeland Security employs a cadre of Homeland Security Special Agents across the State – at least one in each of our ninety-five counties. These law enforcement officers focus on threats to our schools and critical infrastructure and regularly conduct behavioral-based threat assessments. Our Homeland Security Special Agents come from varied backgrounds and bring a depth and breadth of experience to their mission to serve and protect Tennesseans.
- Homeland Security partners with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation to co-direct the Tennessee Fusion Center – a team effort of local, state, and federal law

enforcement, in cooperation with the citizens of the State of Tennessee, for the timely receipt, analysis and dissemination of terrorism information and criminal activity relating to Tennessee.

- Homeland Security helps to facilitate the distribution of federal grant funding every year from the DHS Homeland Security Grant Program. Since inception in 2003, OHS has seen over \$280M come to Tennessee and go toward projects designed to make Tennesseans more secure. I'll speak more about these grants in a moment.
- Tennessee Homeland Security maintains a Cyber Security expertise focused on Homeland Security issues at the state and local level by providing training and assisting in responses to cyber-related incidents.
- Tennessee Homeland Security maintains a close watch on our state's Critical Infrastructure. DHS has designated 16 different Critical Infrastructure sectors ranging from Energy to Financial to Agriculture to Transportation. All these sectors are vital to our state. We work with law enforcement and our stakeholders to determine vulnerabilities and mitigate the threat.
- And last, but certainly not least, Tennessee Homeland Security partners with local law enforcement, the Tennessee Department of Education, local school districts, the mental health community, juvenile court systems, and communities around the state to keep our children safe by helping to develop and conduct security assessments at our state's K-12 public schools and investigate threats before they materialize on the school's doorstep.

As we gather here today during National Police Week to honor the fallen peace officers across our nation, it is also a time for us to focus on the challenges faced by law enforcement and the threats to our homeland. My testimony will focus on three areas to highlight some successes

and challenges. Thank you again for the opportunity to be here.

I would like to start with security in our schools. On March 27, 2023, Nashville was rocked by a shooting at the Covenant School. Three children and three adults lost their lives in addition to the shooter who was killed by police while she was still shooting at arriving officers from a second story window of the school. This shooting so close to home further steeled our resolve to do everything we can to prevent something similar from happening again.

We approach school security in Tennessee by focusing on three main areas of concern:

- First, physical security such as door locks, cameras, barriers, access control procedures – sometimes a simple solution works best.
- Secondly, proper response protocols must be in place and exercised. If a tragic event does happen, law enforcement must be trained to respond appropriately and stop the killing. School students and administrators must be trained and have a plan to shelter in place or evacuate as appropriate. All these plans must be exercised regularly – a new state law in Tennessee requires it. We saw in the Covenant shooting the rapid and professional response of officers from the Metro Nashville Police Department. There is no doubt the bravery and rapid response of the officers saved lives that horrible day.
- The third focus of concern is perhaps the most complex. We must investigate every credible threat and evaluate the subject’s capability and intent to act violently. Research such as the U.S. Secret Service’s National Threat Assessment Center study published in 2021, titled “Averting Targeted School Violence” looked at sixty-seven averted school attacks. The study found 94% of school shooters told someone they were going to do it. The other 6% in the study were behaving so oddly that bystanders reported them. So, in all these cases, we see that law enforcement officers, educators, mental health counselors, and concerned community members must be listening and ready to report and act on any threatening behavior or statements.

The Office of Homeland Security partners with schools to encourage this type of reporting. Of course, some kids feel more comfortable communicating electronically. So, In Tennessee, we instituted the SafeTN App to allow students (or members of the community) to anonymously report threatening behavior. The app also provides resources for anyone contemplating suicide or self-harm. The Tennessee Office of Homeland Security operates a 24/7 threat desk where these incoming calls for help or action are acted upon immediately.

As I mentioned earlier, the Governor of Tennessee proposed, and the TN General Assembly funded, a Homeland Security Special Agent in each of Tennessee's ninety-five counties to help coordinate the multi-agency approach to school security and to conduct these behavioral-based threat investigations.

Tennessee's local law enforcement officers play a critical role in school safety by acting as School Resource Officers (SROs). Last year, the Governor proposed, and General Assembly provided, funding to place one SRO in each of Tennessee's K-12 public and charter schools. This grant funding is managed by the Office of Homeland Security and is available directly to law enforcement agencies to hire, train, and equip law enforcement officers to serve in the important SRO role. Of the \$140M allocated on July 1, 2023:

- Over \$101M has been awarded upfront for salary, benefits, training, and equipment.
- 154 law enforcement agencies applied and were funded.
- 1356 schools are covered by this state grant.
- As of 3/31/24, 1309 of 1356 schools were staffed with an SRO (97%)

Is this approach to school security working? Although we don't claim to have solved the issue of school security, we are seeing positive results. For example,

In the fall of 2023, Homeland Security agents, working with local Sheriff's Deputies, began an investigation of a student who had come to school in full tactical gear and made a bomb threat.

The investigation indicated that subject had a fascination with the military, weapons, and explosives and that he also fantasized about killing people. Further investigation revealed the subject owned several knives and smoke grenades. Information was discovered that revealed the subject was frequently a victim of bullying by other students. A search warrant of the subject's cell phone showed evidence of making threats of being a terrorist, a member of the Taliban, conducting a school shooting, and shooting police. The subject underwent a court ordered mental evaluation where he was determined to have homicidal tendencies. The subject was admitted to a mental health facility for further evaluation and care.

We work a significant number of cases just like this one. Since the beginning of this academic year - approximately August 1, 2023 - the Office of Homeland Security has logged over 322 threats to schools in Tennessee – or more than one threat to a school every day. And this number reflects only those threats which are known to us – either reported through our reporting mechanisms or reported by schools directly to us, or reported by local, state, or federal agencies to us. We do not know the actual total number of school threats in the state because the local schools and law enforcement agencies are not required to report them to us. The problem is big.

Nothing is more important than the safety and security of our children. Law enforcement will continue to prioritize the security of our schools.

I would now like to pivot to the subject of grants. Tennessee has benefitted greatly from the Federal Homeland Security Grant Program since its inception in 2003. As you know, three individual grant programs make up the federal Homeland Security Grant Program:

- State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)
- Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) – Nashville area only
- Operation Stone Garden (for border states)

Federal funding for these state and territorial preparedness grant programs (SHSP, UASI, and

Operation Stone Garden) has dropped 44% since FY2010—including a 10% cut alone for FY2024.

These programs that states and territories rely on for homeland security funding have all seen declines. On top of the decline in aggregate dollar amounts, given inflation, the purchasing power of each dollar provided has dropped more than 20% since 2014.

These grant programs are a very worthwhile endeavor and we have had much success responding to manmade and natural disasters because of them. For example, in the immediate aftermath of the Nashville Christmas Day bombing in 2020, which damaged a piece of critical infrastructure and shut down 911 communications centers in the region, equipment acquired through the HSGP such as command posts, alternate communications equipment, rescue equipment, and training for responders was deployed and aided in the Response and Recovery efforts. With much of the equipment acquired through this program at the local level, it has served multiple functions for manmade and natural disasters and has created enduring capabilities in all of Tennessee's ninety-five counties.

Another very important federal grant program is the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). This program provides support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements for nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack. In Tennessee, requests for funding under this program have skyrocketed from 10 applicants in 2019 to 103 applicants last year – a tenfold increase. This year's application process is currently open and expected to see increases in applicants from last year.

These grant funds have saved lives.

On July 31, 2023, a suspect attempted to gain entry into the Margolin Hebrew Academy in Memphis with the apparent intent to kill those inside this Jewish school. After unsuccessful attempts to gain entry through locked doors, the subject fired shots outside the school and fled.

He was encountered by police a short distance away and was shot and taken into custody by police after brandishing a weapon. The school credited recent security upgrades with avoiding tragedy. Specially, the school wrote a letter to my office crediting the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). The letter read in part,

“I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to both of you for your invaluable support in securing and administering the NSGP for enhancing our security measures. The implementation of the latest security grant allowed us to reinforce our entrances with new doors and access control, ultimately preventing the shooter from gaining entry. Additionally, the cameras installed from a previous grant played a pivotal role in assisting law enforcement in locating and neutralizing the shooter swiftly.”

Again, these grant funds save lives. And as federal funding of these programs declines, the needs are increasing.

In Tennessee, the need to help protect our non-profits and houses of worship does not rely on federal funding alone. The Tennessee General Assembly recently allocated money for a new state grant program for nonprofits and houses of worship. Like the federal nonprofit grant, we have seen a sharp increase in requests for these limited funds. In the FY23 state program, we received over \$2.2M in requests, far outstripping the \$750,000 of state funds we had available to award.

Finally, I'd like to speak briefly about an emerging threat to Tennessee and our nation where we need help from the federal government. Part of my role as Deputy Commissioner for Homeland Security is to evaluate the potential for future threats and take mitigation measures now to protect Tennessee.

When I peek over the horizon to anticipate what may be coming, one challenge I see is weaponized Unmanned Aerial Systems, or drones. The proliferation of drones has become a

problem from a security and law enforcement perspective. While the federal government has taken steps to regulate use of drones and to some degree license users, little is available for state and local law enforcement in the way of countering drones that may be used as a method of attack.

It's no secret this drone threat is real. Drones can be used to smuggle payloads, transport contraband, and carry lethal payloads or other weaponized materials. We've seen weaponized drones recently in the war in Ukraine, and in attacks on Israel.

In the United States, we've seen an increasing number of drones in sensitive locations. For example, last fall, in two higher profile instances, a drone flew over an Ohio State football game, as well as a Baltimore Ravens playoff game. In Tennessee, we saw drones flying over public gatherings and causing safety concerns for law enforcement aircraft in the area.

Since drones are classified as aircraft by the FAA, only certain federal agencies, including DHS and DOJ, currently have the legal authorization to mitigate threats from UAS. While many states have taken steps to regulate where drones can be flown, states do not have the authorization to mitigate a drone in-flight—they can only monitor its flight path and penalize those who fly in prohibited areas.

I believe the probability of a weaponized drone attack in the United States should be a top priority for all of us who hold positions of responsibility for the security of our nation's homeland. I ask this Committee to prioritize Counter-UAS (C-UAS) for funding and expanded cooperation with states in this area.

I have mentioned several times today the importance of partnerships. Law Enforcement in Tennessee and around the country take pride in working together to support each other under very difficult conditions. These partnerships – which are crucial to success – were never more evident to me than on Christmas Day 2020 when a vehicle borne explosive device was

detonated in downtown Nashville, all but destroying a city street. Only a few hours after the explosion, I found myself standing in the rubble on 2nd Ave and observing federal, state, and local law enforcement all working together to determine what happened and why. The partnerships, information sharing, and preparedness funding contributed to quickly identifying the perpetrator, confirming he was deceased, and later confirming that he acted alone.

As the Deputy Commissioner of Tennessee's Office of Homeland Security, keeping the people and places in Tennessee safe and secure is on my mind every day. Our dedicated group of highly experienced law enforcement and public safety personnel always stand ready to serve, secure, and protect the people of Tennessee. But a single law enforcement or public safety agency cannot do it alone. We need each other. We need the support of the United States Congress and the support of the American people.

I thank you once again for the opportunity to be here today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the Committee.

My name is Mike Chapman, I am the elected Sheriff of Loudoun County, Virginia. I appreciate being invited to testify at this important hearing during what is one of the most important weeks of the year for law enforcement.

Loudoun County sits about 30 miles southwest of Washington, DC, and is home to about 450,000 residents.

I am in my 46th year of law enforcement, having served as a police officer and detective in Maryland, twenty-three years with the Drug Enforcement Administration as a Special Agent from coast to coast and in three foreign assignments, and over 12 years as the elected sheriff in Virginia's largest full-service sheriff's office employing close to 900. Prior to being elected sheriff, I served three years as a law enforcement subject matter expert with Booz Allen. I bring first-hand knowledge of police work, federal experience, a private sector perspective, and the complexities associated with the elected office of sheriff.

I am here today on behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and serve as its Chair for Homeland Security and on its Board of Directors.

I'd like to address today's hearing "Standing Strong on the Thin Blue Line: How Congress Can Support State and local Law Enforcement." Historically and currently law enforcement collaborates well together, regardless if it is a sheriffs' office or police department. When national law enforcement organizations collectively present their concerns and positions – whether in support or opposition to legislation – Congress needs to listen. Congress' decision can significantly impede law enforcement's service, performance – i.e. investigations or even recruiting. Supplying grant money or funding is not the cure all. Backing from Congress in all aspects is essential.

This is National Police Week as America honors the day-to-day service and sacrifice of our law enforcement community. And on this day, Peace Officer Memorial Day, we honor those who have given their lives in the line of duty. This year we have already witnessed 58 line of duty deaths among law enforcement officers, with 21 of those by gunfire.

Our job is dangerous, and we need your help to serve and protect our communities - and ourselves. We ask that you recognize how law enforcement has and continues to raise the bar. The progress I have witnessed since I was hired to be a police officer in 1978 when it comes to training, professionalism, innovation, and best practices is nothing short of amazing. It is important that you recognize this progress and publicly show your support for our profession. It is also important that you listen so that you can help us do our job better.

Let's start with intelligence gathering and police response.

Currently, there are 80 state or locally run fusion centers in 50 states and US territories. They receive grant federal grant funding which accounts for about 1/3rd the cost of operation. There is

also federal, state and local coordination through six strategically placed Regional and Information Sharing Systems (RISS) centers across the U.S.

Considering that local law enforcement are the boots on the ground, it is critical that federal information flows quickly in our direction, even if the information is incomplete. The responsibility for this communication and coordination primarily falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Intelligence and Analysis (I&A). I&A is the only federal entity that is statutorily required to coordinate homeland security threat information sharing with state and local governments through fusion centers. Congress should ensure I&A is equipped and empowered to carry out that mission effectively.

In Loudoun County, I experienced a personal case study with DHS regarding poor communication, both laterally with other federal agencies, and onward to state and local agencies.

In February 2022, I was made aware that some 1,000 refugees from Afghanistan would be arriving in Loudoun County in two weeks as part of “Operation Allies Welcome” following the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. This would be the first wave during a six month period – all to be located at the National Conference Center dorm-style living facility in a suburban, residential area of our county next to a middle and high school.

I immediately reached out to the DHS’ Chief of Staff for additional information and to question their lack of notification earlier to local law enforcement and our public safety partners. We needed to know how well were the refugees were vetted, if the local hospital had been contacted, if school personnel and community members living within walking distance been notified, if any houses of worship had been contacted, if language capabilities services been retained, and how security would be conducted. Unfortunately, none of these concerns had been addressed. DHS subsequently postponed resettlement for 2 weeks, still not addressing these issues.

I alerted the public and organized a community stakeholders' meeting including dozens of agencies which led to specific assignments and a community forum that, for the most part, alleviated the apprehension of the community. Our local initiative made a huge difference. For the next six months potential chaos was averted, and there were no major public safety incidents. This extraordinary effort, however, would not have been necessary had DHS communicated an organized plan. We hope that this will improve in the future.

Today we face a new set of challenges on many of our college campuses and cities over matters in the Middle East. It is critical that we receive timely information from DHS to get ahead of the curve.

We need your help. We need your backing. We need improved communication from DHS to our local officers and deputies. Thank you, again, for holding this hearing, and for listening.



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“Serving Those Who Serve”

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May 13, 2024

Chairman Green, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Michael Bullock and I'm the President of the Austin Police Association in Texas as well as a Senior Police Officer with the Austin Police Department.

I wish it were amidst better times that I sit here before you today, but this somber week of honoring our fellow law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty sets the tone for the state of our profession.

In my view, the state of law enforcement is dire. We all recognize that criminal justice as a whole, is a complex policy issue for which no singular solution exists. But if we continue to do nothing – the sense of lawlessness being perpetuated in urban city centers and across the country will only get worse.

Austin is the 10th largest city in the United States with a million people living in the Capitol of Texas. Despite this, we don't even make the top 25 list when it comes to staffing. We're 700 officers short of where studies done by the city of Austin have shown we need to be. Our staffing issues can be linked to a few key events, though our struggles are shared by agencies across the country.

In 2017 the Austin City Council unanimously voted against a contract with the Austin Police Association which governs the wages, benefits, and working conditions of the men and women of the Austin Police Department. As a result, beginning in 2018 we have had more officers leave our department each year than have joined. Compounding this problem in 2020 was when our city leaders defunded our department by \$150,000,000, cut 150 authorized positions, and cancelled cadet classes all for the sake of political posturing.

Our staffing has been in a freefall that's led us to a vacancy rate of over 30%. Little surprise then that after these decisions and an exodus from the department began, that a year later our number of homicides nearly doubled. The last 3 years have been the highest homicide numbers in Austin's history.

Though we are not a border city, the impact of immigration policies is felt by us as well. Our city has asked for help from the Texas State Troopers who came for a time and had a notable impact on crime. But due to the ongoing border crisis they were called away to help secure the Texas border and no longer able to help us in Austin. In May of 2023, teenagers shot and killed a man in southeast Austin when attempting to rob him. The reason they gave for this heinous crime, was they knew State Troopers had left Austin and decided to start committing crime again.

Adding additional layers of complexity to this issue is a lackadaisical attitude towards holding criminals accountable by judges and prosecutors, while at the same time seeing those same prosecutors target officers, which has in turn encouraged criminals to be increasingly violent towards law enforcement.

Over these same time periods we've seen a myriad of critical incidents take place. We have dealt with a serial bomber planting improvised explosive devices across our city killing our residents, had numerous mass shootings including one breaking out during one of our largest festivals, and most notably on our minds is an incident that took the life of one of our own. On November 11, 2023 in the early morning hours, our APD SWAT team was called to a residence in southeast Austin where an armed subject was barricaded inside the residence, had already stabbed one his family members with two more inside, and shot at officers. Fearing for the lives of others inside the residence and knowing this vile suspect had already attempted to kill one of his own family members and willingly shot at our fellow APD officers – our SWAT team went through the door to try and save lives. After going in they were met by a hellacious barrage of gunfire from the suspect who was well armed and wearing body armor. While the suspect was ultimately taken out it came at a high price. Two of our officers were shot, one of which was Officer Jorge Pastore who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Across this country we now see a law enforcement officer shot in the line of duty every 21 hours. This year alone we've had over 145 officers shot which has been increasing year over year.

Our job is to uphold the Constitution and enforce the laws passed by yourselves as well as your state and local counterparts. This is a charge we take seriously and one we are willing to sacrifice our lives for. I sit here before you today though pleading for your help. We need help in addressing our staffing needs, support in enforcing our laws, providing better training resources, and transcending the political rhetoric to end the war on law enforcement and restore law and order in our country. The trends we see in Austin are not isolated – and if not reversed, I fear that lawlessness is all but inevitable.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Bullock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Bullock
President
Austin Police Association

COVER PAGE

NAME: Rodney N. Bryant

**Position: National President, National Organization of Black Law
Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)**

DATE: May 15, 2024

**TITLE: “Standing Strong on the Thin Blue Line: How Congress Can
Support Local Law Enforcement”**

Testimony

National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)

Before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland

Security

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Chairman, Congressman Mark Green MD, Ranking Member,
Congressman Bennie Thompson, and committee members, I bring you
greetings on behalf of the Executive Board, members, and constituents
of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives –
NOBLE.

My name is Rodney Bryant, and I am the National President. NOBLE
serves as the conscience of law enforcement by being committed to
Justice by Action. NOBLE has 58 chapters and represents over 4,500
members worldwide that consist of chief executive officers and
command-level law enforcement officials from federal, state, county,
municipal law enforcement agencies, and criminal justice practitioners.

I have served more than 35 years in the law enforcement profession in various positions of increasing responsibility to include serving as patrol officer, senior police, sergeant, lieutenant, assistant commander, major, and as the 25th chief of the Atlanta Police Department. It is an honor for NOBLE to provide written testimony on the topic of “Standing Strong on the Thin Blue Line: How Congress Can Support Local Law Enforcement.”

I would be remiss if I did not recognize that this week is National Police Week where we honor and remember those law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. In 2023, approximately 136 officers died in the line of duty representing a 40% reduction compared to 2022. However, one officer lost is one too many. NOBLE will continue to stand vigilant and in solidarity with law enforcement in efforts to reduce this statistic. We invite Congress to join us in this “NOBLE” pursuit.

On April 29th, our nation experienced the deadliest attack against U.S. law enforcement officers since 2016. An AR-15 semi-automatic rifle and a 40-caliber handgun were deployed in a Charlotte, NC shooting that resulted in four law enforcement officers being killed and wounding four others. I extend heartfelt prayers and condolences to the officers' families, agencies, and affected communities. NOBLE is very concerned about the level of gun violence in the United States, and specifically the correlation between violence and the proliferation of assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. It is our organization's opinion that violence—particularly gun violence is a public health issue. And, as with all public health issues, it demands a comprehensive, nonjudgmental, pragmatic, evidence-based approach to saving lives and reducing injury.

A positive step towards addressing the level of gun violence in our nation was taken with the passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. NOBLE supported this legislation. The bill combined gun safety legislation with mental health and school security resources.

Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Highlights:

- Increases funding and improves mental health, school safety, crisis intervention and anti-violence programs.
- Requires tougher background checks for younger gun buyers, those who are deemed a risk in certain cases, and closes the so-called “boyfriend loophole,” barring intimate partners who have been convicted of domestic violence crimes against their significant other from having a gun even if they don’t live together.
- We at NOBLE recommend that in addition to the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, that Congress, the Law Enforcement Profession, and communities across this nation work to secure the passage of bi-partisan legislation that will at minimum address the following:
 - Mandate Universal Background Checks
 - Ban Assault Weapons
 - Ban High-Capacity Magazines

- Mandate Safe Gun Storage

- Relaxation of Gun Laws such as Permitless Carry which exist in 29 states. It is NOBLE's belief and many in our profession that the continued relaxation of gun laws poses a real danger to law enforcement officers and the community.

- Key Statistics
 - 2023 Mass Shootings – Approximately 656 Mass Shootings

 - Firearms Number #1 Killer of Children (ages 1-17)

 - In 2023, Firearms-related officer deaths accounted for 35% of the 136 officers killed in the line of duty.

 - Studies have shown that officers are significantly more likely to be fatally shot in states with weaker gun laws and higher levels of gun ownership.

It is my opinion that the law enforcement profession is in need of comprehensive federal legislation such as the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. NOBLE did support the Biden Administration's Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety. There are key elements in the order that we feel are reasonable and actionable such as accountability, workforce support, use-of-force, and resource support for mental / behavioral health services. Our organization recommends to Congress a bi-partisan effort to find common ground on a very basic constitutional right within the 14th Amendment – Equal Protection Under The Law. For many parts of our society, citizens have not felt equally protected by a key American institution, law enforcement. In many communities of color, the first names of unarmed citizens that were killed by officers, who took an oath to protect and serve, resonate today and for generations to come. Their names are Tamir, Eric, Breonna, George, to name a few.

Lastly, I appeal to our congressional leaders of both parties to continue to support our federal law enforcement agencies in the areas of funding, public support, and policies that ensure that they maintain their readiness. It is critical that federal law enforcement resources are available to support state, county, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. There must be a unified congressional understanding of the importance of ensuring Homeland Security for our nation which equates to strengthening all levels of public safety.

On behalf of the law enforcement leaders and constituents of NOBLE, I thank you for supporting our profession and our ability to maintain public safety. Our members stand ready to meet the needs of our communities and nation. Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony.