



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

Testimony of
Patrick Yoes
National President
Fraternal Order of Police

**“When Badges Become Targets: How Anti-Law Enforcement
Rhetoric Fuels Violence Against Officers”**

before the Committee on Homeland Security
in the U.S. House of Representatives



Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Thompson, and the other Members of the distinguished Committee on Homeland Security. My name is Patrick Yoes and I am the National President of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). I thank you for the opportunity to talk about the alarming increase in deliberate and targeted attacks on law enforcement officers at every level of government.

The Fraternal Order of Police is the oldest and largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States, representing more than 382,000 members in over 2,200 local lodges in every region of the country. We represent rank-and-file law enforcement officers who serve in departments of all sizes—from small rural agencies to large urban departments.

We thank the Committee for having this hearing to discuss the issue of violence and threats of violence targeting law enforcement officers. Since the latter half of 2015, the National FOP has been collecting data on officers who are shot in the line of duty. We undertook this effort because there seemed to be a measurable increase in the number of officers who were injured by a firearm. Officers who are shot and killed in the line of duty are tracked by many different organizations—the National FOP, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program, the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), and the Officers Down Memorial Page (ODMP) as well as various other groups at the State and local levels. But, apart from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA) program, no one was collecting data on officers who were shot but survived. The FOP stepped up and began collecting this data in an effort geared to identify ambush attacks on officers because we view these attacks as the most dangerous to our officers.

The National FOP took the definition of “ambush” or “ambush-style” attacks from an October 2015 report from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) within the U.S. Department of Justice entitled [Ambushes of Police](#). Ambush attacks are sudden and surprising to the victim. There is no provocation and excessive force is used in most ambush attacks. To the extent that we were able, we worked to identify ambush attacks but soon learned that data on officers who survived being shot, regardless of the circumstances, was valuable.

In 2018, the COPS Office, under the auspices of the National Blue Alert Program, also began tracking this data. In 2019, the National FOP was awarded a COPS grant from which allowed us to enhance our ability to collect this data, expand the number of data points we collect, and provide better analysis—particularly with respect to the nature of the shooting incidents. We provide monthly reports to the COPS Office, the public, policymakers here in Washington, and media outlets. The COPS Office has been publishing an annual report every spring since 2020 using data collected by the National FOP.

A record number of officers—378—were shot in the line of duty in 2023, 50 of whom were killed. There were 115 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement in which 138 officers were shot and 20 of whom were killed. Of the officers killed by

gunfire in 2023, 44% were ambushed.

Last year was the very first time in the decade that we have been tracking this data that the number of officers shot in the line of duty declined. In 2024, 342 officers were shot in the line of duty, 50 of whom were killed. There were 62 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement in which 79 officers were shot, 18 of whom were killed.

As of this Monday, 314 officers have been shot in the line of duty, 43 of whom were killed. There have been 62 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers in which 83 officers were shot, 21 of whom were killed.

This violence spans the nation, with Texas reporting the most incidents (39 officers shot as of 30 November), followed by Georgia (23), Florida (19), Pennsylvania (18), and Ohio (17).

When people look at this data, they often just see numbers. But we must remember that these are real people we are talking about—fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters. They are heroes who suit up and show up every day to serve and protect the communities they love.

These grim numbers would be even worse, were it not for significant advancements in medical trauma science and anti-ballistic technology. Officers who are shot in the line of duty have a better chance of surviving the incident.

Every felonious attack on a law enforcement officer, especially by gunfire, is disturbing regardless of the circumstances. Officers are in the line of fire and must always be vigilant and maintain the highest level of situational awareness. In most response scenarios, officers can quickly assess situations, recognize threats, and take adequate defensive actions. Tragically, not every threat can be seen or mitigated.

In May 2017, the FBI released a report entitled [The Assailant Study: Mindset and Behavior](#). The report identified a disturbing trend of attackers who are motivated by a desire and willingness to kill law enforcement officers. This motivation, the report concludes, is from a “singular narrative that portrays the officer as guilty in traditional and social media and the subject as the victim.” Fourteen of the 50 assailants—28%—that participated in this study expressed a desire to kill law enforcement officers. This is a frightening statement.

The erosion of respect for law enforcement coupled with public figures spewing anti-police rhetoric—rhetoric that is amplified by social media platforms—has fueled greater aggression towards police officers than what has been seen in previous years—undoubtedly emboldening people to turn verbal assaults into brazen acts of violence against law enforcement. This aligns with the concept of “stochastic terrorism,” where inflammatory rhetoric creates a climate that emboldens individuals to commit independent acts of violence without explicit direction.

One such example is the Maryland man who shot and seriously injured his girlfriend before deciding to drive to New York City to kill police officers in retribution for the death of Eric Garner, posting on social media: "I'm putting Wings on Pigs Today ... They Take 1 of Ours ... Lets Take 2 of Theirs." Upon arrival, he approached the passenger window of a New York City Police Department (NYPD) patrol car and opened fire. Officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu were struck in the head and upper body and died at the scene.

Anti-police rhetoric led to the mass murders of law enforcement officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge in 2016, along with too many other instances in which an individual was motivated solely by a desire to injure or kill a cop. Surges in anti-police sentiment following high-profile events like officer involved shootings have been linked to increased assaults on officers. The National FOP believes that dehumanizing language erodes respect for the badge and emboldens those predisposed to harm officers by ambush when attacks are unexpected. For example, a December 2017 study by the COPS Office, which examined law enforcement officer fatalities from 2010-2016, found that 20% of ambushed officers were seated in their patrol cars and 56% of officers killed in an ambush were not on a call or engaged in any enforcement activity. Many of these officers were simply eating, standing post, or were targeted and killed while at their homes or on their way home. All targeted, one could conclude, by someone whose sole motivation was to kill a cop.

In 2018, the Criminal Justice Information Services Division within the FBI released a report entitled [Ambushes and Unprovoked Attacks: Assaults on Our Nation's Law Enforcement Officers](#). This comprehensive report concluded: "while the overall number of officers who were feloniously killed was declining, the percentage of officers feloniously killed during surprise attacks was increasing."

Now that we have established that attacks on officers have been increasing and that a significant number of assailants are motivated by a desire to hurt or kill an officer, we must ask: how did we get here? How did we reach a point in our communities where law enforcement officers went from being universally respected as "Officer Friendly"—a figure parents would urge their children to seek out if they were ever in trouble—to being the subject of such distrust and disdain? And why is there no sense of urgency to address this issue in the U.S. House of Representatives?

We have clearly documented a terrifying increase in violence targeted at police. Yet Congress is taking no action to address this epidemic when it could be considering H.R. 1551, the "Protect and Serve Act"—yet the House Judiciary Committee refuses to bring the bill to mark-up because Members of the Freedom Caucus serving on that committee oppose the bill. This bill would make it a Federal offense to target a law enforcement officer with violence in certain, limited circumstances. It would not make every attack against an officer a Federal crime, but it would give the U.S. Department of Justice a tool to fight back against targeted attacks on police like those in New York City, Dallas, and Baton Rouge. The bill was drafted as a direct response to the increased number of law enforcement officers who have been targeted.

The Administration has been extremely supportive of law enforcement. President Trump has issued two Executive Orders—one directing the Justice Department to seek enhanced sentences for crimes against law enforcement officers, another ending the Biden moratorium on the use of the Federal death penalty.

Vice President Vance was the keynote speaker at our National Peace Officers Memorial Service this year. In his remarks, the Vice President recognized the importance of the event and called for a return to law and order in our communities. He addressed these ambush attacks on officers and stated that the Administration would direct Federal resources to law enforcement officers to improve training and pay. He additionally stated that the Administration would create new legal protections for officers and seek the death penalty for those convicted of harming law enforcement officers.

Yet there is no sense of urgency in Congress and no recognition of the actual physical and too often lethal violence that has targeted our nation's law enforcement. Today's hearing, Mr. Chairman, is the first time that the House has examined this issue since 2018 when the "Protect and Serve Act" passed on an overwhelming 382-35 vote. Prior to the floor vote, the bill favorably reported by committee on a unanimous vote.

I know the bill is not within this committee's jurisdiction, and I do give credit to Chairman Jordan for his repeated attempts to schedule a mark-up on the bill. Unfortunately, he and the National FOP have not been able to overcome the bill's Republican opponents. But I welcome this opportunity to speak directly to Members of this distinguished committee about the critical importance of this bill.

We have clearly documented a terrifying increase in violence targeted at police. Yet Congress is taking no action to address this epidemic. Following the turmoil of the 2020 election and credible threats of violence against poll workers and election officials, the U.S. Justice Department has launched a full task force to address these threats. This is frustrating to our members because we know—we know—that law enforcement officers are already under threat and are being shot and killed because of the job we do—just like the election workers. There seems to be a greater sense of urgency to address potential violence against election workers than actual violence against law enforcement officers. In the previous Congress, Representative Gottheimer, the lead Democrat on the "Protect and Serve Act," introduced the "Election Worker and Polling Place Protection Act," which is very similar to the "Protect and Serve Act," and creates a new Federal offense in the criminal code. As far as I know, no election workers were targeted or killed in any recent election.

Similarly, Representative Swalwell, who is not a cosponsor of the "Protect and Serve Act," has introduced H.R. 3203, the "Journalist Protection Act," which creates a new Federal offense and allows Federal charges to be brought against anyone who inflicts bodily harm on a journalist.

Why does Congress believe that election officials and journalists suddenly need

additional support and protection? Because of a sharp increase in vile and violent rhetoric aimed at them for simply doing their job. And, because we know—we have actual data—that demonstrates an escalation of rhetoric against occupants of a particular profession ultimately leads to violence. In June 2018, we witnessed the killing of five journalists in Annapolis, Maryland, by a gunman who escalated verbal harassment into mass murder. I recognize this is a horrific tragedy, but it is difficult to compare the slaughter of five journalists in one mass murder with the fact that 656 officers were shot in just the last two years and 11 months.

Violent and hateful rhetoric, if left unchallenged, leads to physical violence. We have seen it happen on a widespread basis in the profession of law enforcement. It has increased greatly this year and is directed to Federal law enforcement in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Border Patrol in part because of the Administration's efforts to enforce the nation's immigration laws. We didn't write those laws, but we are sworn to uphold them and enforce them. The public has directed their anger and hostility toward these Federal agents—who, again, are just doing their jobs—as well as the State and local officers assisting them or just serving their communities. All of that anger, amplified by social media, has led to an enormous spike in attacks against ICE agents. These officers are in physical jeopardy not just from the criminals they pursue, but from those motivated and triggered by anti-law enforcement sentiments.

When a member of the public calls for help, we answer that call. Now is the time for our elected officials at every level of government to answer our call and support law enforcement by addressing the surge of targeted violence against police officers.

We must challenge the hateful rhetoric that leads to this violence—whether it is against a cop, a reporter, or a poll worker—and let our communities know that it is not acceptable. It is incumbent upon you, our elected officials, as well as our community leaders, to stand up and support our men and women, and speak out against the violence aimed at them. We will continue our efforts to get H.R. 1551 through the Committee on the Judiciary, and I thank you all again for this opportunity to speak for the 382,000 officers in every region of our great nation and the importance of this legislation to them.

I would be pleased to answer any further questions for the record.



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

The Protect and Serve Act

Facts and Analysis

The legislation would create a new Federal offense for those who deliberately target law enforcement officers with violence and is a direct response to the increased number of law enforcement officers who have been targeted for attack.

The FACTS

- In October 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice released a report entitled: [Ambushes of Police](#). The report detailed the number of ambush attacks on law enforcement officers from 1990-2013. In 2013 alone, there were between 200 and 300 ambush attacks reported. The Executive Summary of the report states:
...the proportion of fatal attacks on officers attributable to ambushes [is] increasing. Concerns about targeted violence against police are on the rise, while officers must not only be guardians of the public but also be prepared to respond to violence targeting them.
- In May 2017, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released a report entitled: [The Assailant Study: Mindset and Behavior](#). The report identified a disturbing and growing trend of attackers who are motivated by a desire to kill a law enforcement officer. This motivation, the report concludes, is from a “singular narrative that portrays the officer as guilty in traditional and social media and the subject as the victim.”
- A December 2017 study by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services entitled [Making It Safer](#) examined law enforcement officer fatalities from 2010-2016, including ambush attacks. The study found that 20% of ambushed officers were seated in their patrol cars and that:
56 percent were not on a call or engaged in any enforcement activity. Many of these officers were simply eating, sitting on post, or in five cases, targeted and killed while at their home or on their way home.
- In 2018, the Criminal Justice Information Services Division within the FBI released a report entitled [Ambushes and Unprovoked Attacks: Assaults on Our Nation's Law Enforcement Officers](#). This comprehensive report concluded: “While the overall number of officers who were feloniously killed was declining, the percentage of officers feloniously killed during surprise attacks was increasing.”

- In 2022, **331** officers were shot in the line of duty, **62** of whom were killed. There were **89** ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers in which **126** officers were shot and **32** of whom were killed.
- In 2023, a record number of officers—**378**—were shot in the line of duty, **46** of whom were killed. There were **115** ambush-style attacks on law enforcement in which **138** officers were shot and **20** of whom were killed. Of the officers killed by gunfire in 2023, **44%** were ambushed.
- In 2024, **342** officers were shot in the line of duty, **50** of whom were killed. There were **61** ambush-style attacks on law enforcement in which **79** officers were shot, **18** of whom were killed.
- As of 30 November 2025, **314** officers have been shot in the line of duty, **43** of whom were killed. There have been **62** ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers in which **83** officers were shot, **21** of whom were killed.

ANALYSIS: Section by Section

Section 1. Short Title.

The short title of the bill is the “Protect and Serve Act.”

Section 2. Crimes targeting law enforcement officers.

This section creates a new Federal offense for anyone who “willingly” assaults a law enforcement officer” and would sentence such an offender to a term of imprisonment of 10 years or for life for murder or attempted murder. In order for these charges to be filed, the U.S. Attorney General must certify that:

- the State has asked the Federal government to assume jurisdiction;
- Federal prosecution is “in the public interest and necessary to secure substantial justice.” In order to make this certification, the U.S. Attorney General must consider:
 - the verdict or sentence at the State level;
 - the extent of planning and premeditation;
 - the intended outcome;
 - a disregard for human life; and
 - the benefit to public safety from Federal prosecution.



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES
National President

1 DECEMBER 2025

JIM PASCO
Executive Director

MONTHLY UPDATE:

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS SHOT
AND KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY**

The National Fraternal Order of Police regrets to report that as of midnight on 30 November, there have been **314** officers shot in the line of duty in 2025 (**-4%** from 2024 YTD; **-10%** from 2023 YTD). Of those officers shot, **43** of them were killed (**-6%** from 2024 YTD; **+2%** from 2023 YTD). The year with the highest number of officers shot through this date was 2023, when **350** officers were shot through the first eleven months of that year.

There have been **62** ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers this year. These ambush-style attacks have resulted in **83** officers shot, **21** of whom were killed.

The number of ambush-style attacks listed does not include the countless incidents where an officer was shot at but not struck by gunfire during an ambush-style attack.

314**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS
SHOT IN THE LINE OF DUTY****43****LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS
KILLED BY GUNFIRE****83****LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WERE SHOT
IN **62** SEPARATE AMBUSH-STYLE ATTACKS****NUMBER OF OFFICERS SHOT IN THE LINE OF DUTY
IS **-4%** FROM THIS TIME IN 2024**

2025

YEAR TO DATE

SHOT

314

KILLED

43

2024

FULL YEAR

SHOT

342

KILLED

50

2023

FULL YEAR

SHOT

378

KILLED

46

2022

FULL YEAR

SHOT

331

KILLED

62

2021

FULL YEAR

SHOT

346

KILLED

64

2020

FULL YEAR

SHOT

312

KILLED

47

OFFICERS SHOT IN THE LINE OF DUTY IN 2025

STATE-BY-STATE BREAKDOWN

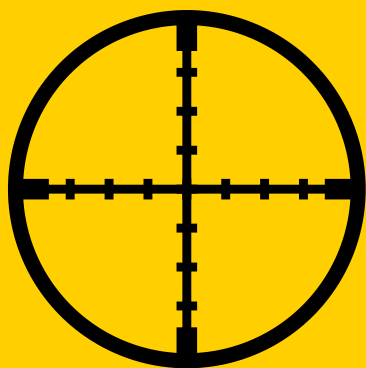
ALABAMA	5	MAINE	1	OREGON	0
ALASKA	1	MARYLAND	3	PENNSYLVANIA	18
ARIZONA	10	MASSACHUSETTS	1	PUERTO RICO	0
ARKANSAS	0	MICHIGAN	7	RHODE ISLAND	0
CALIFORNIA	15	MINNESOTA	2	SOUTH CAROLINA	2
COLORADO	9	MISSISSIPPI	5	SOUTH DAKOTA	1
CONNECTICUT	3	MISSOURI	6	TENNESSEE	7
DELAWARE	0	MONTANA	1	TEXAS	39
FLORIDA	19	NEBRASKA	1	UTAH	5
GEORGIA	23	NEVADA	1	VERMONT	1
HAWAII	3	NEW HAMPSHIRE	1	VIRGINIA	16
IDAHO	0	NEW JERSEY	5	WASHINGTON	2
ILLINOIS	9	NEW MEXICO	4	WASHINGTON, D.C.	3
INDIANA	9	NEW YORK	8	WEST VIRGINIA	1
IOWA	3	NORTH CAROLINA	10	WISCONSIN	5
KANSAS	7	NORTH DAKOTA	0	WYOMING	1
KENTUCKY	6	OHIO	17	U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS	0
LOUISIANA	12	OKLAHOMA	6	GUAM	0

NATURE OF THE ATTACKS

Every felonious attack on a law enforcement officer, especially by gunfire, is disturbing, regardless of the circumstances. Officers are always susceptible to life-threatening attacks and therefore must always be vigilant and maintain the highest level of situational awareness.

In most cases, officers are able to quickly assess situations, recognize threats, and take adequate defensive actions. Tragically, not every threat can be seen or mitigated. Perhaps most troubling and worrisome are ambush-style and other calculated attacks on law enforcement.

Premeditated ambush-style attacks are particularly disturbing and pernicious. These types of attacks are carried out with an element of surprise and are intended to deprive officers of their ability to defend against the attack. Premeditated attacks contribute to a worrisome desensitization to evil acts that were once largely considered taboo except by the most depraved individuals.



AMBUSH-STYLE ATTACK

An "ambush-style attack" is defined as when an officer is struck by gunfire without any warning or opportunity to defend themselves.

THE GROWING CONCERN

- ▶ In October 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice released a report entitled [Ambushes of Police](#). The report detailed the number of ambush attacks on law enforcement officers from 1990-2013. In 2013 alone, there were between 200 and 300 ambush attacks reported. The Executive Summary states:

"...the proportion of fatal attacks on officers attributable to ambushes [is] increasing. Concerns about targeted violence against police are on the rise, while officers must not only be guardians of the public but also be prepared to respond to violence targeting them."

- ▶ In May 2017, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released a report entitled [The Assailant Study: Mindset and Behavior](#). The report identified a disturbing and growing trend of attackers who are motivated by a desire to kill a law enforcement officer. This motivation, the report concludes, is from a "singular narrative that portrays the officer as guilty in traditional and social media and the subject as the victim."
- ▶ A December 2017 study by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services entitled [Making It Safer](#), examined law enforcement officer fatalities from 2010-2016, including ambush attacks. The study found that 20% of ambushed officers were seated in their patrol cars and that:

"56 percent were not on a call or engaged in any enforcement activity. Many of these officers were simply eating, sitting on post, or in five cases, targeted and killed while at their home or on their way home."

THE GROWING CONCERN (CONTINUED)

- In 2018, the Criminal Justice Information Services Division within the FBI released a report entitled [**Ambushes and Unprovoked Attacks: Assaults on Our Nation's Law Enforcement Officers**](#). This comprehensive report concluded:

"While the overall number of officers who were feloniously killed was declining, the percentage of officers feloniously killed during surprise attacks was increasing."

BACKGROUND

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) within the U.S. Department of Justice published the [**2024 Year-End Summary on Law Enforcement Officers Shot in the Line of Duty**](#), which contains research conducted by staff with the National FOP's Legislative Office.

In October of 2019, the National Fraternal Order of Police partnered with the National Blue Alert Network to collect and analyze data on reported shootings of law enforcement officers nationwide. Using media monitoring software and general research, staff with the National FOP's Legislative Office has tracked, collected, and analyzed publicly available information to produce the *2024 Year-End Summary* on officers shot and killed in the line of duty. The report contains data on law enforcement officers shot in the line of duty, both fatally and non-fatally, for the expressed purpose of better understanding the nature and frequency of incidents that could give rise to the issuance of a [**Blue Alert**](#).

The information in this monthly update reflects preliminary numbers and is subject to change.

[VIEW THE 2024 YEAR-END SUMMARY](#)

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF JESUS VARGAS

Brazoria County Sheriff's Office, Texas

End of Watch: Wednesday, January 15, 2025



BORDER PATROL AGENT DAVID CHRISTOPHER MALAND

United States Border Patrol, U.S. Government

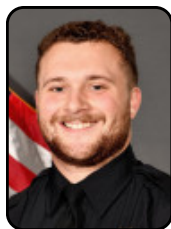
End of Watch: Monday, January 20, 2025



OFFICER JASON ROSCOW

North Las Vegas Police Department, NV

End of Watch: Tuesday, February 4, 2025



OFFICER JEREMY R. LABONTE

Roswell Police Department, GA

End of Watch: Friday, February 7, 2025



PATROLMAN ANDREW WILLIAM DUARTE

West York Borough Police Department, PA

End of Watch: Saturday, February 22, 2025



POLICE OFFICER CAMERON ROBERT GIRVIN

Virginia Beach Police Department, VA

End of Watch: Saturday, February 22, 2025

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



POLICE OFFICER CHRISTOPHER M. L. REESE

Virginia Beach Police Department, VA

End of Watch: Saturday, February 22, 2025



DEPUTY SERGEANT MARTIN SHIELDS, JR.

Hinds County Sheriff's Office, MS

End of Watch: Sunday, February 23, 2025



SERGEANT JOSEPH ANTHONY AZCONA

Newark Police Division, NJ

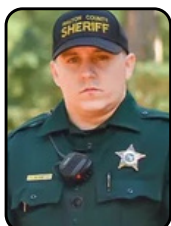
End of Watch: Saturday, March 8, 2025



POLICE OFFICER OSMAR RODARTE

Marysville Police Department, CA

End of Watch: Wednesday, March 26, 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF WILLIAM MAY

Walton County Sheriff's Office, FL

End of Watch: Wednesday, April 2, 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF BRANDON RAY SIKES

Columbia County Sheriff's Office, GA

End of Watch: Saturday April 26, 2025

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



LIEUTENANT ALLEN "NOOCHIE" CREDEUR

Rayne Police Department, LA

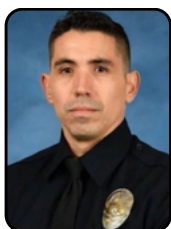
End of Watch: Monday, May 5, 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF DANIEL WESTON SHERRER

Morrow County Sheriff's Office, OH

End of Watch: Monday, May 26, 2025



POLICE OFFICER SAMUEL RIVEROS

Baldwin Park Police Department, CA

End of Watch: Saturday, May 31, 2025



POLICE OFFICER TIMOTHY ONTIVEROS

Bloomfield Police Department, NM

End of Watch: Sunday, June 1, 2025



POLICE OFFICER KRYSTAL RIVERA

Chicago Police Department, IL

End of Watch: Thursday, June 5, 2025



POLICE OFFICER GABRIEL FACIO

Apache Junction Police Department, AZ

End of Watch: Thursday, June 5, 2025

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



UNDERSHERIFF BRANDON GAEDE

Phillip's County Sheriff's Office, KS

End of Watch: Friday, June 27, 2025



POLICE OFFICER KENDALL CORDER

Milwaukee Police Department, WI

End of Watch: Sunday, June 29, 2025



DETENTION OFFICER FRANCISCO PAUL FLATTES

Cherokee County Sheriff's Office, NC

End of Watch: Monday, June 30, 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF DEVIN MASON

Darlington County Sheriff's Office, SC

End of Watch: Tuesday, July 1, 2025



PATROL AGENT JOSHUA LEMONT BYRD

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CA

End of Watch: Thursday, July 17, 2025



POLICE OFFICER PHILLIP C. WAGNER

Lorain Police Department, OH

End of Watch: Thursday, July 24, 2025

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF ELIJAH MING

Wyandotte County Sheriff's Office, KS

End of Watch: Saturday, July 26, 2025



DETECTIVE FIRST GRADE DIDARUL ISLAM

New York City Police Department, NY

End of Watch: Monday, July 28, 2025



SERGEANT JASON BLAKE

McComb Police Department, MS

End of Watch: Tuesday, August 5, 2025



POLICE OFFICER DAVID ROSE

DeKalb County Police Department, GA

End of Watch: Friday, August 8, 2025



POLICE OFFICER SUZANNE O

Maui County Police Department, HI

End of Watch: Friday, August 15, 2025

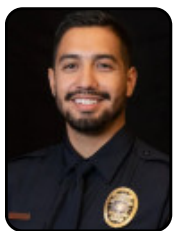


SERGEANT LEE SORENSEN

Tremonton-Garland Police Department, UT

End of Watch: Sunday, August 17, 2025

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



POLICE OFFICER ERIC ESTRADA
Tremonton-Garland Police Department, UT
End of Watch: Sunday, August 17, 2025



DETECTIVE SERGEANT CODY MICHAEL BECKER
Northern York County Regional Police Department, PA
End of Watch: Sunday, September 17, 2025



DETECTIVE ISAIAH D. EMENHEISER
Northern York County Regional Police Department, PA
End of Watch: Sunday, September 17, 2025



DETECTIVE MARK EDWARD BAKER
Northern York County Regional Police Department, PA
End of Watch: Sunday, September 17, 2025

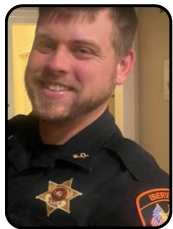


SERGEANT SCOTT HEIMANN
Hays Police Department, KS
End of Watch: Sunday, September 28, 2025



OFFICER HENRY FRANKLIN
Sikeston Department of Public Safety, MO
End of Watch: Monday, October 6, 2025

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS KILLED BY GUNFIRE IN 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF CHARLES RILEY

Iberville Parish Sheriff's Office, LA

End of Watch: Monday, October 6, 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF ANDREW NUNEZ

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, CA

End of Watch: Monday, October 27, 2025



SERGEANT JAMES DOTSON, JR.

Hinds County Sheriff's Office, MS

End of Watch: Sunday, November 2, 2025



DEPUTY SHERIFF DEVIN JARAMILLO

Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office, FL

End of Watch: Friday, November 7, 2025



POLICE OFFICER ROGER SMITH

Wakemed Campus Police & Public Safety Department, NC

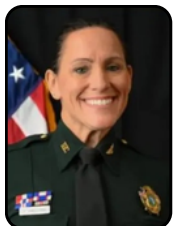
End of Watch: Saturday, November 8, 2025



POLICE OFFICER MARC BROCK

Vivian Police Department, LA

End of Watch: Friday, November 14, 2025



SERGEANT TERRI SWEETING MASHKOW

Indian River County Sheriff's Office, FL

End of Watch: Friday, November 21, 2025



The National Fraternal Order of Police is the world's oldest and largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers. We proudly represent more than 382,000 members from more than 2,200 lodges.

We are the voice of those who dedicate their lives to protecting and serving our communities. We are committed to improving the working conditions of law enforcement officers and the safety of those we serve through education, legislation, information, community involvement and employee representation. No one knows the dangers and the difficulties faced by today's police officers better than another officer, and no one knows police officers better than the FOP.

NATIONAL FOP LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

THE STEVE YOUNG LAW ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTER

Office Phone

(202) 547-8189

Jim Pasco, Executive Director

jpasco@fop.net

Tim Richardson, Senior Legislative Liaison

trichardson@fop.net

David Taboh, Legislative Liaison

dtaboh@fop.net

Benjamin Stokes, Legislative Liaison

bstokes@fop.net

Laura Gormally, Legislative Liaison

lgormally@fop.net



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

Written Statement for the Record

Jonathan F. Thompson
Executive Director and CEO
National Sheriffs' Association
Alexandria, VA

Before the Committee on Homeland Security
United States House of Representatives
December 3, 2025

Chairman Garbarino, Ranking Member Thompson, and distinguished members of the Committee:

Thank you for holding this hearing on "When Badges Become Targets: How Anti-Law Enforcement Rhetoric Fuels Violence Against Officers," and for the opportunity to testify.

I am Jonathan Thompson, Executive Director and CEO of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), representing over 3,000 elected sheriffs and more than 10,000 public safety officials nationwide. The NSA is committed to professionalism, education, training, and supporting law enforcement at all levels.

Brief Summary

Violence against law enforcement is rising sharply, with record-high assaults and officer shootings. This trend is fueled by growing anti-law enforcement rhetoric, amplified through social media and public discourse, and coupled with harassment tactics like doxing and swatting. This rhetoric dehumanizes officers and puts their families at risk. Federal action is urgently required to protect those who serve our communities.

The Threat and Trends

We see a disturbing rise in verbal and physical attacks. In 2023, 79,091 officers were assaulted with 466 shot, the highest in a decade; and as of October 2025, 285 officers have been shot this year with 38 fatalities, including 58 ambush-style attacks. These are not mere statistics—they represent families living in constant fear. Online platforms have increased coordinated threats, while inconsistent prosecutions embolden offenders.

Contributing Factors and Threats

- Anti-law-enforcement rhetoric normalizes hostility by portraying officers as enemies rather than protectors.

- Digital threats include doxing, swatting, and AI-enabled harassment that escalate risks to officers and their families.
- Lax prosecutorial responses leave gaps in accountability.

Insights on Rhetoric and Violence

Some members of this Congress use inflammatory terms loosely and seek to minimize them. Regardless of party, such language serves one purpose: to incite violence. However, research by Professor Robert Pape of the University of Chicago demonstrates a counterproductive outcome. This rhetoric neither raises more campaign funds nor increases voter enthusiasm. Instead, it motivates individuals and groups who seek justification to attack—whether by beating, stabbing, or shooting—and then seek forgiveness. There should be no forgiveness from this Committee, its members, or any elected leader for such incitement.

I experienced the violence of the 1960s firsthand and understand that words matter and have consequences. Modern examples abound—from Aldo Moro to recent political leaders and extremists using religion to fuel violence. There is no difference between an Ayatollah calling for death to “devils” and an elected official using violent epithets to describe law enforcement. Our 230,000 deputies serve communities daily; while not perfect, they strive for justice—and when they fail, the justice system holds them accountable. But for 900,000 law enforcement officers, equal respect and protection from incitement must come from you. Derisive names only undermine the very people doing your lawful bidding. If leaders fail to act responsibly, the cycle of violence may one day come full circle, and when law enforcement is needed most, respect and support should be their reward—not scorn.

Federal Shortcomings

There is no consistent federal penalty for doxing or swatting law enforcement. Monitoring and reporting systems are inadequate, especially for small and rural agencies lacking cyber capabilities. Accountability for violent offenders is weak, and no national protections exist for officers’ personal information online.

Three Clear Recommendations

1. Pass comprehensive, anti-doxing and anti-swatting legislation explicitly covering law enforcement officers and their families, with mandatory minimum sentences for offenses targeting first responders.
2. Establish a coordinated federal task force (DHS and DOJ) to monitor and respond swiftly to online threats against law enforcement personnel.
3. Increase funding for cyber threat intelligence units, especially in small and rural sheriffs’ offices, and launch a bipartisan national campaign promoting civil discourse and condemning violence against law enforcement and first responders.

Conclusion

When rhetoric dehumanizes, violence follows. Congress must lead now to restore civility, reject hostility, and affirm that violence against law enforcement officers is unacceptable and un-American. The brave men and women who wear the badge ask you to lead—do so now. Thank you for the opportunity to testify; I stand ready to work with this Committee to protect those who protect us all.

Statement of Michael Hughes

Executive Director,
Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association

*“When Badges Become Targets: How Anti-Law Enforcement Rhetoric Fuels Violence
Against Officers”*

U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security
December 3, 2025

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Thompson, and distinguished Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA). FLEOA is a national organization representing more than 33,000 federal criminal investigators, police officers, and law enforcement professionals. Our members perform a vital and unique role in protecting this nation. This includes ensuring lawful trade and commerce, stopping the spread of fentanyl and other dangerous substances from entering our communities, preventing terrorism and the proliferation of transnational criminal organizations, and protecting officials of all three branches of government both at home and abroad.

I have served in federal law enforcement for more than 34 years, decades spent not only enforcing the nation’s laws, but mentoring younger officers, supervising field operations, coordinating across agencies, serving as a senior executive and political appointee leading the U.S. Marshals Office here in the District of Columbia, and leading the United States’ global law enforcement initiatives with INTERPOL as the Director of INTERPOL Washington. I now proudly serve as FLEOA’s Executive Director, dedicated to advocating for the safety and well-being of the federal law enforcement professionals who protect and serve this nation.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed many shifts in policy, public sentiment, and national priorities. During these times of transition, the one constant has been the men and women who wear the badge and remain steadfast in their commitment to the Constitution and enforcing the laws enacted by Congress. Today, however, the environment in which these professionals serve is increasingly hostile, marked by rising levels of violence, threats against the lives of officers and their families, and online harassment. We saw evidence of this in last Wednesday’s brazen and premeditated ambush attack just blocks from the White House that claimed the life of West Virginia National Guard Specialist Sarah Beckstrom and left Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe critically wounded. Both had been sworn in less

than 24 hours prior to the attack to assist federal law enforcement and D.C.'s Metropolitan Police Department in reducing violent crime and enhancing public safety in the nation's Capital. FLEOA mourns with the family of Specialist Beckstrom and offer our thoughts and prayers to Sgt. Wolfe and his family for a full and speedy recovery.

While the motive for last Wednesday's ambush attack is still under investigation at the time of this writing, the unfortunate reality is that it was not unique, nor will it be the last such attack on those who protect and serve our communities. And the title of today's hearing, "*When Badges Become Targets*," accurately captures the experience that far too many federal officers are forced to confront, and which is in part driven by increasingly hostile personal attacks that undermine their legitimacy and endangers their safety.

My testimony today will focus on the apolitical, oath-driven nature of federal law enforcement, the evolving threat landscape, the role that anti-law enforcement rhetoric plays in the increased threats to law enforcement officers and their families, the need for both accountability and protection, and recommendations for congressional action.

The Role of Federal Law Enforcement and the Presidential Mandate

Federal law enforcement is guided by a mission that is deliberately insulated from politics: to abide by the Constitution and enforce the laws that Congress writes. Presidents of both parties have relied on federal agencies to address urgent threats to public safety, and every officer is charged to carry out their responsibilities with neutrality, integrity, and professionalism.

Yet within these boundaries, it is common for Administrations to have different priorities when it comes to the allocation of resources, personnel, and enforcement activities to address pressing threats to public safety and national security. The most transformational changes in my career came during the George W. Bush Administration as a result of the heinous terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the passage of laws like the USA PATRIOT Act and the Homeland Security Act. Agencies across the government were realigned, moved between Cabinet agencies, and granted expanded authorities and missions. Federal law enforcement extended its traditional emphasis on enforcement of the criminal laws and crime prevention to include counterterrorism and became part of a global effort to reduce this nation's vulnerability to terrorism. And we saw walls between agencies break down and the prioritization of information and intelligence sharing between federal agencies and our state and local partners through entities such as the Joint Terrorism Task Forces. Under President Biden, federal agencies intensified operations targeting fentanyl trafficking across the U.S. – Mexico border and within domestic distribution networks. Each administration, faced with evolving threats, has directed

federal law enforcement resources accordingly. Similarly, President Trump has tasked federal agencies over the past year with strengthening enforcement efforts particularly against violent crime, organized criminal networks, transnational criminal organizations, and the trafficking of illicit fentanyl.

What does not change is the oath each officer swears, which is to support and defend the Constitution; to perform duties objectively, impartially, and with integrity; and to uphold the rule of law, regardless of which party controls the Executive Branch. When officers fail to meet this standard, there are robust mechanisms for oversight and discipline. Federal agencies maintain internal affairs offices, Inspectors General conduct independent reviews, and Congress exercises statutory oversight. Accountability is not an afterthought. It is a core pillar of the profession. And while these mechanisms help to enhance public trust in law enforcement, little is being done to enhance law enforcement's trust that they will be protected when the environment around them becomes increasingly dangerous.

A Rising and Dangerous Threat Environment

Over the past year, the threat environment facing federal officers has grown more volatile. While national crime data often aggregate local, state, and federal incidents, the overall trend is rising levels of violence against the nation's law enforcement officers, with the FBI reporting more than 85,000 assaults on law enforcement officers in 2024, a ten-year high.¹ Officers at all levels have also faced an alarming increase in ambush-style attacks. According to data from the Justice Departments COPS Office and the Fraternal Order of Police, in 2024 alone, there were 62 ambush-style attacks resulting in 80 officers shot and 18 killed.²

Federal officers have not been exempted from violent and targeted attacks. They execute high-risk warrants, disrupt transnational criminal networks, investigate violent offenders, and interdict narcotics and weapons. These roles have historically put them in direct contact with individuals who are often heavily armed, increasingly desperate, and emboldened by anti-law enforcement narratives circulating online. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial here in Washington, D.C. bears eternal witness to the dangers that law enforcement officers face on a daily basis, and the high cost of carrying out a sworn duty to protect and serve others.

But I would suggest that what we are seeing in 2025 is truly unprecedented. The polarization and politicization of federal law enforcement's role in enforcing the nation's

¹ ["FBI report: Violent crime fell in 2024, but assaults on officers reached 10-year high,"](#) CNN.com (Aug. 5, 2025). Last visited Nov. 28, 2025.

² ["Law Enforcement Officers Shot in the Line of Duty: 2024 Year-End Summary,"](#) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice, April 2025. Last visited Nov. 28, 2025.

immigration laws and increasing public safety in major U.S. cities has placed law enforcement officers in greater physical jeopardy than any I have witnessed in my 34-year career. Just last week, the Department of Homeland Security reported a more than 1,150% increase in assaults and violence against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers this year compared to the same period in 2024.³ DHS also announced the arrest of a high school assistant principal from Virginia and his brother who were plotting to travel to Las Vegas to obtain weapons in a plot to attack ICE Agents and police officers.⁴ In October, ICE-Homeland Security Investigations arrested a Florida man who made online threats to kill ICE Agents, spewing hate-filled rhetoric online such as “Shoot the ICE Nazis dead.”⁵ Meanwhile, Mexican drug cartels have reportedly offered a “tiered” bounty system for the murder of ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers and have deployed spotters to provide the cartels with information on the movements of CBP and ICE personnel.⁶

But the threats now extend well beyond the physical:

- Doxing and digital harassment have escalated, with officers’ personal information including their home addresses, photographs, and family details, posted online in attempts to intimidate or retaliate.
- Targeted online campaigns often arise after routine enforcement actions, sometimes fueled by misinformation or deliberate mischaracterizations.
- Family members of officers report receiving threatening messages or being followed, a chilling and unacceptable development.

Federal officers have had to relocate their families, change established routines, and/or reduce their public presence due to credible threats – threats that, only a decade ago, would have been considered extreme outliers.

In one instance, three individuals were indicted on charges of illegally doxing an ICE agent after following the agent home and livestreaming their pursuit and posting the agent’s address online.⁷ In another case, a federal grand jury charged two individuals with

³ [“Sanctuary Politicians’ Rhetoric Fuels More than 1,150% Increase in Violence Against ICE Law Enforcement,”](#) Department of Homeland Security press release (Nov. 24, 2025). Last visited Nov. 26, 2025.

⁴ [“Virginia High School Assistant Principal and Brother Arrested for Plotting to Kill ICE Law Enforcement Officers,”](#) Dept. of Homeland Security press release (Nov. 26, 2025). Last visited Nov. 26, 2025.

⁵ [“HSI Arrests Florida Man Who Posted Death Threats Online to ICE Officers,”](#) Dept. of Homeland Security press release (Oct. 31, 2025). Last visited Nov. 26, 2025.

⁶ [“Cartels issuing bounties up to \\$50,000 for hits on ICE, CBP agents: DHS,”](#) ABC News (Oct. 14, 2025), last visited Nov. 26, 2025.

⁷ [“Federal Grand Jury Charges Three Women with Following ICE Agent Home from Work and Livestreaming His Home Address on Instagram,”](#) Dept. of Justice press release (Sept. 25 2025). Last visited Nov. 30, 2025.

knowingly transmitting threats to injure a DHS ICE deportation officer and his wife.⁸ Such events, once rare, are now disturbingly common.

The Impact of Rhetoric in Rising Threats Against Federal Law Enforcement

Criticism of law enforcement can be constructive. Law enforcement is a dynamic profession, not static, and is constantly evolving to better serve the goals of public safety and impartial enforcement of the nation's laws. We see that in the way we conduct investigations, utilizing an array of new tools and systems that were not in place even 10 years ago such as the increased use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyze vast amounts of data and help identify crime patterns. The personal safety of law enforcement has been enhanced as well, from improvements in bullet resistant body armor to new containment devices that prevent officers from being inadvertently exposed to fentanyl. The same is true for systems of accountability for law enforcement personnel. The widespread adoption of body worn cameras and multiplicity of social media platforms has added never before conceived means to address situations when law enforcement officers have been accused of misconduct or acting improperly.

Following the heinous death of George Floyd in 2020, FLEOA worked closely with both the first Trump Administration and then with the Biden Administration to address several reforms to law enforcement practices, policies, and protocols, including use-of-force. For federal law enforcement, these efforts resulted in reforms that struck the right balance between understanding the public need for accountability and the need to ensure all communities are safe and protected.

As we have seen over the years, criticism of law enforcement policies and practices can be constructive and lead to needed and positive reforms. But what we are witnessing now in terms of the rhetoric from some public personalities in traditional media and social media, and from some elected officials at every level of government is neither constructive nor beneficial. It is outright vilification.

We have seen the consequences of this type of vilification in politics in recent years, when policy disagreements seemingly rationalize violence as the only solution, and further an "us vs. them" mentality that has poisoned our political discourse. The attempted assassination of Justice Brett Kavanaugh in 2022, the 2025 targeted assassination of Minnesota State Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband, the assassination of Charlie Kirk, and the two assassination attempts last year on President Trump. These are all

⁸ ["Social Media Provocateurs Charged with Threatening to Harm Federal Agent and His Wife,"](#) Dept. of Justice press release (Oct. 7, 2025). Last visited Nov. 30, 2025.

examples of how hostile political rhetoric can escalate into lethal action, and why toning down, countering, and ultimately reducing incendiary rhetoric is essential to lowering the temperature of our politics and preventing future acts of violence.

When public figures in particular portray federal law enforcement as “the enemy,” or as participants in advancing a partisan political agenda, it degrades trust and fuels hostility. These characterizations blur the distinction between policy disagreements and the individuals sworn to carry out lawful directives. This rhetoric reverberates across social and traditional media, often morphing into personalized attacks, conspiracy theories, and calls for harassment against the men and women of law enforcement.

Federal law enforcement officers are not nameless, faceless automatons. They are parents, veterans, volunteers, and community members. Many serve in the very communities where they were raised. They shop in the same stores, attend the same schools, and share the same hopes as the people they protect. Reducing them to political caricatures is not only inaccurate, it is dangerous.

This is especially true when elected leaders use their status and microphones to cast suspicion upon or express contempt for law enforcement and unintentionally signal to hostile individuals that officers are legitimate targets. This erodes public safety and undermines cooperative policing efforts essential to addressing violent crime, drug trafficking, and homeland security threats.

Accountability, Professionalism, and Protection

Federal law enforcement welcomes accountability. It ensures the public’s trust and strengthens our institutions. But accountability must be paired with protection – protection from violence, intimidation, and harassment.

Officers who fear for their safety or that of their families cannot perform at their best. Morale declines, recruitment becomes more difficult, and retention suffers. Protecting law enforcement is not a partisan political exercise. It is a matter of national security. The threats we face, from fentanyl traffickers to violent offenders to transnational criminal organizations, grow more complex each year.

Over the past several years, federal agencies have also faced significant staffing challenges that pose a direct risk to officer safety, including difficulties in attracting highly qualified applicants and a looming retirement cliff of experienced officers. As recently as October 2023, OPM reported that roughly 34 percent (more than 45,000) of federal law enforcement officers are eligible to retire within the next 5 years. This is the post-9/11 generation, the brave men and women who, much like today, answered the call to help protect this nation.

Unfortunately, the current pay, benefits, and personnel structures disincentivize retention and put federal law enforcement agencies at a competitive disadvantage in recruiting top talent. In particular, the statutory provisions governing law enforcement retirement and compensation, while perhaps innovative when they were enacted in the 1980s and early 1990s, have become antiquated and have not kept pace with state and local governments. Federal law enforcement officers are also the only employees in the public or private sector who are entitled to overtime pay, can be required to work unlimited hours of overtime work, but can only be compensated up to an antiquated “cap” on overtime pay. This has led to widespread pay compression, especially in high cost of living areas to which our members are assigned, and harms retention of experienced officers.

The rise in attacks and assaults on federal law enforcement is occurring at a time when we are already facing a severe recruitment and retention crisis in nearly every agency. And many of these heroes are putting their lives on the line daily without even receiving adequate compensation. Now, more than ever, we need legislation that supports and protects our officers. That includes addressing the problems caused by the federal pay cap that arbitrarily limits the amount of overtime pay officers and agents can receive. This is one of the most serious personnel issues facing our profession because it greatly undermines morale, recruitment, and retention.

Legislative Recommendations to Strengthen Officer Safety

In light of the rapidly increasing threat environment faced by our nation’s federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, FLEOA has consistently worked with Members of Congress and other law enforcement stakeholder groups to prioritize the passage of legislation to enhance officer safety. Many of these have been around for years and unfortunately have not gained the widespread support or attention they deserve. That is why FLEOA urges Congress to consider the following actions to help protect and support our law enforcement officers who work every day to keep our communities safe:

1. Strengthen 18 U.S.C. § 111

This statute criminalizes assaulting or resisting federal officers. Congress should review potential enhancements or clarifications to ensure that serious attacks, especially those involving premeditation or online targeting, carry appropriate penalties. FLEOA spearheaded a similar effort in the 117th Congress to pass the “Jaime Zapata and Victor Avila Federal Officers and Employees Protection Act” which amend sections 111, 115, and 1114 of Title 18, U.S. Code, and is named after two hero ICE Agents who were victims of an ambush attack by a Mexican drug cartel in 2011 that claimed the life of Agent Zapata.

2. The “Protect and Serve Act” (H.R. 1551/S. 167)

This bipartisan bill would create federal penalties of up to 10 years for knowingly attempting to injure a law enforcement officer, and up to life in cases involving death or attempted murder. This measure has strong support among national law enforcement organizations.

3. The “Back the Blue Act” (H.R. 4310)

This legislation would expand federal protections for officers across all levels – federal, state, and local – and impose tough penalties on those who kill or attempt to kill law enforcement officers.

4. The “Blue Shield Privacy Act” (H.R. 4828)

This bill would enhance protections for federal law enforcement officers and their families against doxing by expanding what is considered "restricted personal information" for which it is illegal to share publicly to harm federal officers or their immediate family. Specifically, this bill would designate as "restricted personal information" items such as license plate numbers, biometric information, workplace address, school address, and GPS coordinates, making it punishable by up to 5 years in prison to share this information publicly for the purpose of threatening, intimidating, or inciting violence against a federal officer or their immediate family.

5. Strengthen 18 USC 912

This statute prohibits impersonating a federal officer while demanding or obtaining something of value in that pretended character. Congress should review potential enhancements by removing the requirement of a specific financial benefit.

Together, these measures would help deter violence, reinforce the seriousness of attacking law enforcement, and send a clear message that Congress stands behind the rule of law and those sworn to uphold it.

Conclusion

Federal law enforcement officers enforce the laws enacted by Congress – laws that protect our citizens, our borders, our communities, and our national security. They do so out of a deep sense of duty to the Constitution and to the American people.

Yet the rise in targeted violence and the corrosive rhetoric directed at these public servants have created an atmosphere that jeopardizes officer safety and erodes public trust. We cannot allow this trend to continue. Protecting those who protect us is an essential responsibility of this body.

I urge Congress to reaffirm its commitment to the men and women of federal law enforcement by strengthening protections, condemning harmful rhetoric, and ensuring that officers have the resources, respect, and legislative backing they need to continue their vital work.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this issue. I look forward to answering your questions.

12/3/25

Good morning,

I was invited today to speak in my personal capacity, I suspect, because Ranking Member Thompson is familiar with my history, as I've been on the receiving end of threats and violence due to the work I've done in the name of the law. I experienced intense violence during the insurrection of January 6th and, because I had the temerity to describe it publicly, threats against my life, bomb threats at events I attend, people trying to find out where I live, and whether I have a wife or children they can use against me.

I have a feeling I will be asked about how the lionization of the insurrectionists only enhanced their zealotry, about how the mass pardoning of every criminal who assaulted my colleagues and I encourages further lawlessness and violence, about how in the intervening years many pardoned insurrectionists have been rearrested for crimes such as reckless homicide, child sexual assault, threats to blow up government buildings and a kill list of FBI agents.

These are all salient points and I'm happy to address them. However, the tenor of the press release announcing this hearing made it sound like certain participants were going to spend a few hours scratching their heads and pretending to not understand why threats against law enforcement have risen so sharply this year and I cannot abide such a farce.

Law enforcement is predicated on the notion that we are a nation of laws, that anyone who is detained by law enforcement officials will be afforded all the rights and protections that are guaranteed to them by the Constitution. It is this exemplary standard of civil society that compels individuals to cooperate when faced with arrest. Flawed as it is, our justice system aspires to and works toward the goal of truth and equal protection under the law. Unfortunately, this year, broad swaths of federal law enforcement have proven that this is no longer the case.

Perjury and contempt of court used to be prohibitive of work in law enforcement but now it appears to be a prerequisite of leadership. Kash Patel, the Director of the FBI, had already been found not credible as a witness in the court of law prior to his appointment and Greg Bovino, the so-called "Commander at Large" of Border Patrol, was found to have lied while under oath in order to justify his use of force against Americans. Even the Secretary of Homeland Security, Kristi Noem, intentionally defied a judge's order to halt the trafficking of prisoners to foreign countries and then bragged about it on national television.

I should add here that one of the hallmarks of secret police forces throughout history is operating outside the law, using violence and intimidation to achieve their objectives.

Every day I wake up and I'm confronted with more heinous acts by some federal law enforcement: pointing their lethal weapons at protesters and journalists, needlessly assaulting citizens on their own property, threatening to shoot and arrest EMTs for doing their job, holding children hostage to try to coerce their parents out of their house. One shot a woman (who committed no crime) several times and bragged about it, saying he "fired five rounds and she had seven holes." Many of these absolute embarrassments to the badge keep their face obscured so to evade any possibility of accountability and their leadership condones it.

If the inhabitants of our country can no longer believe in the rule of law, then they can no longer believe in law enforcement. If they believe they will be denied their basic rights, what motivation do they have to cooperate with investigations, to support law enforcement as an institution?

The fact of the matter is that right now, in the United States of America, there is a secret police force abducting people based on the color of their skin and sending many of them via state-sponsored human trafficking to extraterritorial concentration camps.

So before we go around the room clutching our pearls, wondering how people could possibly compare law enforcement in this country to the Gestapo, maybe we should take a moment and ask ourselves if there isn't some recent behavior on the government's part that could encourage such a juxtaposition.

Thank you.