

Formal Statement of J. Thomas Manger
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For the United States House of Representatives
Committee on House Administration
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Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the current state of the Capitol Police: the improvements that have occurred, challenges that the Department continues to address, and the transition that the Department is making to become a more protective-oriented agency. The Department greatly appreciates the Committee's continued support of the women and men of the U.S. Capitol Police, who courageously carry out their duties of protecting the Members of Congress, staff, visitors, the Capitol Complex, and the legislative process each and every day. Congress' support has been invaluable as we continue to meet the dramatic workload increases in an increasing volatile threat environment.

The United States Capitol Police is unique among federal law enforcement agencies. We patrol a campus that is completely open. The public has a constitutional right to visit, protest, and petition their Representative on Capitol Grounds. Our officers work 24/7 to keep you safe, whether here on Capitol Hill, or when you travel to your home districts. We staff the doors, corridors, plazas, garages, and street corners—in sum, every square foot of the Capitol Grounds, which includes the Capitol, eight Congressional office buildings, as well as three Library of Congress buildings. Prior to the pandemic, the Capitol was visited every year by an estimated seven to ten million people from around the world. Now that the campus is reopened, the Department is once again managing this increased level of visitor activity—all within the context of evolving and increasing threats against Members of Congress and their families, and the need to provide protection nation-wide.

While the Department is not defined by the events of the last three years, the aftermath of that time period continues to impact our resource needs, as do accelerated officer attrition, hiring delays, and other lingering effects of the pandemic. In my testimony today, I will concentrate on three areas that explain the Department's forward trajectory:

1. The Enduring Impact of January 6 and the Pandemic;
2. The Department's Future Challenges and Continued Transformation; and
3. The Need to Usher in a New Phase of Protective Policing.

Enduring Impact of January 6 and Pandemic

In the last three years, the Department confronted two transformative events: the coronavirus pandemic and January 6. These events directly impacted the Capitol community, particularly the men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police, who responded to each crisis with courage and resilience, adjusting and pivoting when needed, and within extremely compressed timelines.

The pandemic represented a historic and unprecedented event that required the USCP to quickly recalibrate and move to an entirely new operational and administrative model. While House and Senate office buildings were closed to the public, the work of the Congress had to proceed unimpeded and within Office of Attending Physician pandemic safety protocols. Under these circumstances, the men and woman of the USCP performed critical job functions with the additional risk of harm to their personal health. The Department had to manage delayed recruitment efforts due to the closure of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), a move that affected the hiring and deployment of new sworn officers--essentially bringing our sworn hiring to a halt. Low officer morale, and the public's declining confidence in law enforcement, put a further strain on the organization. Hiring within law enforcement remains challenging in the post-pandemic environment, not just for the Department but nation-wide, as men and women consider other options that provide a better work-life balance.

Since the start of the pandemic, approximately 429 officers have left the Department, of which 358 left after January 6. After FLETC reopened, the Department committed to onboarding approximately 288 officers a year in order to get ahead of attrition, closing the delta between the Department's sworn FTE cap and the actual number of sworn officers in order address the Department's expanding mission requirements. So far, the Department, with the support of Congress, has been successful in getting ahead of attrition, bringing on 484 officers. The current number of sworn employees on the Department is 1,994 officers, which includes recruits at FLETC. While still below the Department's authorized level, it has allowed us to reopen the campus and provide critical training for our officers, such as CDU training, virtual training and active shooter training within Congressional buildings. We continue to work to increase our sworn uniform staffing to provide more officers the opportunity to take time off to spend time with their families and to provide mission critical training.

The Department has implemented a number of strategies to retain officers, such as bolstering salaries to be more competitive with competing agencies, offering retention bonuses, the student loan repayment program, and specialty pay to attract and retain officers. I would like to thank Congress for its assistance and support in providing this funding, and for understanding the Department's need to reopen the campus in a phased and thoughtful manner tied to its staffing needs.

January 6 exposed weaknesses within the organization. The more than dozen after-action U.S.C.P. Office of Inspector General (OIG) and other recommendations shifted the Department's priorities and accelerated the timeline for resolving the findings of those recommendations, thus beginning the Department's transformation. This audit and oversight review was pivotal. The Department dedicated a significant amount of time and resources to the implementation of recommendations issued by the various stakeholders and oversight entities, including the OIG, the Senate Homeland Security Committee, the General Honoré January 6 Task Force, and other third party reviewers. The OIG alone issued approximately 103 recommendations. Thanks to the Department's sustained efforts, the support of the Capitol Police Board, and the Congress, the vast majority of recommendations issued have been addressed, and those that remain are on a glide path to completion. Of the 103 recommendations made by the IG, 89 recommendations have been closed, leaving only 14 open.

The Department's improvements extend beyond those mentioned above. Other significant enhancements include increasing staffing levels for the Intelligence and Interagency Coordination Division; formally establishing the Howard C. Liebengood Center for Wellness; the onboarding of trauma-informed Employee Assistance Program and wellness specialists; procuring and distributing additional civil disturbance equipment to our sworn officers; obtaining funding for our Dignitary Protection Agents to travel and protect Members of Congress; updating Department technology to enhance intelligence analysis and investigative capabilities; providing iPhones to the entire sworn workforce for information dissemination; installing physical barriers at vulnerable vehicular access points on Capitol Grounds and Department-wide; and specialty training such as civil disturbance and active shooter training.

Future Challenges and Continued Transformation

I fully recognize that the Department's budget is significant. But equally significant are the Department's growing responsibilities and challenges. Unlike other law enforcement agencies, we have been asked in the last two years to develop and implement transformational structural and strategic changes within extremely accelerated time lines, while simultaneously maintaining the staffing and resources needed to carry out the Department's daily core mission. And the effort and manpower resource allocation that undergirds these efforts are not sufficiently recognized or understood. The opening of doors throughout the Congressional Campus exemplifies this challenge. Adequately staffing a campus door requires 3 to 4 officers per shift to ensure a proper level of security (3 shifts per day, often 5-6 days per week.) Long lines are not only an inconvenience to Members, staff, and visitors, they represent a security risk that, in these increasingly volatile times, the Department must address. While the "big picture" reforms are significant and important, staffing daily mission requirements are vital. We engage in a "no fail" mission every day.

While all the Department's needs are important, I cannot overstate how great our resource needs are for the Protective Services Bureau. The sheer increase in the number of threats against Members of Congress—approximately 400% over the past 6 years—requires new and innovative techniques to identify, deter, and mitigate threats before they materialize. Over the course of the last year, the world has continuously changed, becoming more violent and uncertain. A Member of Congress was brutally assaulted, another Member was attacked on the campaign trail, and the husband of the former House Speaker was critically wounded in a politically-motivated attack. These events demonstrate how the Capitol Police need to transform to a more protective agency, one that concentrates on protecting Members and their families throughout the country, not merely in Washington. Upcoming elections, the campaign activities that precede them, and the increasingly heated political rhetoric further heighten the prospect of future security risks and challenges that the Department needs to be prepared to meet.

The Department has struggled to retain our Dignitary Protection Division (DPD) and Investigations Division Agents. DPD is staffed at approximately 70% fully trained agents and supervisors that it was prior to January 6, due to retirements, resignations and transfers. The Department has supplemented DPD with USB reserve officers. However, this has placed a strain on USB. Increasing DPD staffing would allow the USB officers to return to their posts and provide relief to USB officers.

Due to the increased threat environment, our protective responsibilities have increased with the need to staff additional protection details, increased coverage of CODELs and field hearings, as well as provide other enhancements to our current protective details. This staffing level is unsustainable for DPD, agents are averaging nearly 50 hours of overtime a pay-period, more than double the average of uniformed officers. That is the very definition of burning out an employee. We are on pace again this year to receive approximately 9,000 threat assessment cases. Threat Assessment agents carry an average annual case load of nearly 500 cases. We must be able to hire additional agents to meet the workload demands and case backlog. However, despite the backlog, our agents continue to work diligently on the serious threats members and staff face. I recently awarded the Department's Medal of Valor to two of our Investigators who apprehended and seized an assault rifle from an individual who was targeting and stalking a Congressional staff member, preventing likely serious harm to the staffer and potentially other individuals.

The Department is working to remedy this situation. Many of the strategies to address this challenge were included in our FY23 and FY24 budget requests. These strategies include additional positions, 1811 status and LEAP pay which would positively impact our attrition in our Protection Services Bureau. To address our staffing issues in the short term, we have supplemented DPD with reserve officers and when possible we work with other law enforcement agencies for support through our MOU process. We have recently received approval from the Capitol Police Board for amendments to the pay regulations, which will assist hiring positions within DPD and Investigations division thru lateral hires, and rehired annuitants. Once the amendments are approved by oversight committees, we will utilize rehired annuitants to fill Protective officer positions to free up agents from positions such as DPD drivers, residential officers, and our Threats duty desk.

However, our Protective Services Bureau is not the only area where the Department continues to concentrate. The Department is also concentrating on:

- Enhanced intelligence capabilities;
- Expanded physical and technical security capabilities to secure the Capitol Complex;
- Enhanced event planning, and command and control coordination;
- Enhanced response and special operations capabilities;
- Strengthened training capabilities for recruit officer, in-service, physical skills, professional development, and leadership development; and
- Enhanced administrative support infrastructure to support operational and mission- oriented requirements.

Ushering In a New Phase of Protective Policing

The Department currently has a strategic plan that projects out through 2025. The current strategic plan outlines the following four goals, which provide strategic direction as the Department continues to evolve and transform.

1. Invest in the USCP workforce.
2. Optimize the USCP's operational capacity, resiliency, and readiness to meet dynamic mission requirements.
3. Enhance information gathering, analysis, utilization, and dissemination.
4. Uphold Department-wide accountability.

In order to meet the goals of the strategic plan, the Department invested in technology, equipment, and training to enhance intelligence gathering and dissemination to better position the Department to identify threats to the Capitol Complex and Members of Congress at the earliest point in the threat process, and the furthest possible point away from the intended target. Member protection and public safety continue to be a top priority. As such, we dedicated resources to conduct more assessments, increasing the number of assessments for major Congressional events, demonstrations, and marches by over 200 assessments from the previous year. In addition, the USCP worked to improve partnerships with local, state, and government law enforcement agencies to act as a force multiplier for our Protective Services Bureau.

However, the Department recognizes that new and evolving challenges will continue to emerge, rendering it imperative that the Department be positioned, equipped, and resourced to meet and defeat threats to Members of Congress and the Capitol Complex. Strategic planning, forward thinking, proactive versus reactive policing is the new operational model that is best suited to confront the operational challenges facing the Department today and in the future. The Department's traditional model of law enforcement no longer applies to the current context. The old approach of Member protection has been replaced by the need to protect a Member's environment, as well as a Member's family. Keeping you and your families safe is my paramount objective.

The work the Department is undertaking, with the Congress' support, will allow the Department to transition to the next phase of its transformation. We are in the early stages of developing a Concept of Operations strategic plan to help inform the necessary move towards a more protective-oriented model of policing, one that will better serve the Members of Congress and increase the safety of the Capitol Complex.

The Department's reorganization plan complements this strategic vision. It exemplifies the reality that a strong organizational structure fosters positive change and growth, reinforces accountability, internal controls, and employee development. More importantly, it addresses the systemic issues highlighted by the OIG and other oversight reports. The reorganization elevates

and emphasizes training, identifies the need to have effective policies, and looks to identify cutting edge technologies, all the tools needed to meet evolving threats and to keep you safe.

While the Department has made significant strides towards right-sizing Department personnel and pivoting toward a more protective operational model, more work remains to be done. Thus, it is critically important to maintain this momentum. The USCP has risen to meet emerging challenges at every turn, and the FY 2024 budget reflects the Department's determination to continue this upward trajectory.

The Department thanks the Committee for its support and greatly appreciate our continued partnership with the Congress. We welcome any questions or comments.