

Chairman Hal Rogers
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Budget Hearing – Federal Bureau of Investigation
May 07, 2025

Good afternoon.

The subcommittee will come to order. Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the first Fiscal Year 2026 Budget hearing for the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies.

I will begin by recognizing myself for an opening statement.

I'd like to welcome our witness, the Honorable Kash Patel, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to this Subcommittee.

Director Patel was sworn in as the FBI's Director on February 21, 2025.

At your swearing in, you stated that "there will be accountability within the FBI and outside of the FBI, and we will do it through rigorous constitutional oversight."

That's music to our ears.

Americans gave us a clear mandate in November to restore confidence in the FBI and de-weaponize the DOJ and they haven't minced words.

We've heard from communities across the country who want to see a separation between politics and justice.

After four long years I am confident that you have the ability and sheer determination to reinforce the FBI's mission of protecting the American public and upholding the Constitution.

I am looking forward to your leadership in tackling some of the most important and dangerous issues that our Nation is facing.

In fact, we are already starting to see progress since you were confirmed for this role earlier in the year.

First and foremost, we finally have secure borders, making our communities safe again.

Our borders, when unsecured, provide an express lane directly into our country for fentanyl and other illicit drugs that target our children, our schools, our families, and our neighborhoods.

From a crackdown on cartel operations and trafficking to enhanced immigration enforcement, the importance of a strong and secure border cannot be understated.

I want to thank you and President Trump for putting our nation's borders front and center.

However, your work will never cease.

Without taking a day off, your FBI must diligently prevent terrorism from striking our shores, nor can the Bureau allow espionage to overtake our institutions and our people.

The constant advancements in technology and artificial intelligence are a double-edged sword, providing new opportunities for economic development in our communities, but also creating new risks for our hospitals, our banks, our educational institutions, and even putting our children in harm's way when it comes to cybercrimes.

This is an important job, one of the most important in our Nation.

Criminals move fast and change methods regularly to evade capture.

The FBI must be smarter, faster, and anticipate the underworld's next move.

That is why I am looking forward to hearing from you about your plans to make the Bureau more effective and more efficient at fighting violent crime.

This includes potentially moving agents away from Washington D.C. and into FBI Field Offices to better combat rampant crime.

However, just last Friday, the President sent to Congress a preliminary budget request that reflects a \$545 million cut to the FBI.

The information provided was limited in detail, so I look forward to hearing from you about this cut, and if enacted, what impact this level of funding would have on the FBI.

I know with approximately \$36 trillion in debt our government must think and act differently, that is why I pledge to work with you directly as you lead the nation's top crime fighting agency.

You have a very important job to do, but I trust that you are up for the task.

I would now like to recognize the Ranking Member of this Subcommittee, Ms. Meng, for any remarks she may wish to make.