

**Testimony of
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**Before the United States House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, Committee on Appropriations**

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Chairman Ryan, Ranking Member Herrera Beutler, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the United States Capitol Police (USCP) budget request for Fiscal Year 2021. The Department greatly appreciates the Subcommittee's continued support of the women and men of the Department as well as Congress' generosity in providing the resources necessary to support our crucial mission.

The USCP has a unique role – we are the only law enforcement agency responsible for protecting the Congress and the U.S. Capitol Complex. We detect, investigate, and prevent threats made against Members of Congress and the U.S. Capitol. We provide a steady, watchful presence throughout the Capitol Complex, and we are responsible for protecting elected officials to ensure the continuity of government. In addition, the type of policing that we engage in is highly specialized to focus on the unique requirements of protecting our legislative process as well as the First Amendment rights of our citizens; maintaining an open campus so that visitors from across the country and around the world can witness representative democracy in action, and preventing crime and terrorism. We also engage in community policing with our law enforcement partners throughout the city of Washington, D.C., and we conduct investigations with our federal partners including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Secret Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and others.

In June 2019, I had the honor of being sworn-in as the tenth Chief of Police for the United States Capitol Police. In my more than 28 years of law enforcement service, including nearly three years as the USCP Assistant Chief of Police, I could not be more proud to lead a Department that is so highly respected, and is known for its professionalism and national security capabilities. I

strongly believe in our mission, and I know that our team is the best at what we do. From our civilian employees who are critical in supporting our daily operations, to our sworn officers who are out there getting the job done, I value each and every one of their contributions that allow us to successfully achieve our mission.

I look forward to leading the Department into the next decade by continuing to optimize the Department's overall readiness to address the challenges of keeping the Congress and the U.S. Capitol safe and secure in our ever-changing world.

Joining me in this commitment to excellence are my Executive Team, who are here with me today – Assistant Chief Yogananda Pittman, Assistant Chief Chad Thomas, Chief Administrative Officer Richard Braddock, Acting General Counsel Thomas DiBiase, and Chief Financial Officer Dominic Storelli – as well as some members of my Executive Management Team.

I am also joined today by Mr. Michael Bolton, USCP Inspector General, and Officer Gus Papanthasiou, Chairman of the USCP Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). Also attending today's hearing are representatives of the USCP International Brotherhood of Teamsters, who represent our bargaining unit civilian employees. They and their organizations are important partners in the Department's overall success. I value our relationships with our unions, and respect their roles in collaboratively implementing policies and procedures, and addressing personnel concerns with the shared goal of supporting the Department's mission. Currently, we are in negotiations with the FOP regarding our Collective Bargaining Agreement, and I am encouraged by the good faith effort being put forth by both sides.

Effecting Organizational Changes to Enhance Operational Capacities

Last fall, having spent significant time thoroughly and thoughtfully reviewing our overall operations to better address threats, manage Department resources, and develop and support our future leaders, I implemented several organizational changes that became effective on October 20, 2019. These changes are designed to further enhance our operational capacity and internal oversight of the Department's operations. The reorganization also places added concentration on Department-wide internal controls and employee wellness and well-being. I want to thank and

recognize the Capitol Police Board, and our House and Senate Oversight Committees for their support as we put these organizational changes into effect.

In response to the significant increases in our ranks and in our responsibilities, I added a second Assistant Chief Police to our command staff. Prior to October 2019, we had one Assistant Chief of Police who oversaw the day-to-day functions of all five of our operational bureaus. In addition, as Chief, one of my top priorities is to further strengthen our dignitary protection operations and threat information gathering and analysis capabilities to identify any risks of terror attacks whether the danger is from a foreign terrorist organization or from a domestic “lone wolf” assailant.

Under our new Department organizational structure, Assistant Chief Pittman is charged with leading our Protective and Intelligence Operations, and Assistant Chief Thomas is charged with leading our Uniformed Operations. This allows each of them to focus on developing and implementing new mission-critical initiatives, on broadening our protective mission within the Capitol Complex and beyond, on further enhancing our operational readiness, and on ensuring our critical life-safety mission is successfully executed.

To effectively direct the Department’s compliance with its policies, procedures, and processes, and the efficient execution of its programs and initiatives, a new Internal Controls and Risk Management Division was established. The new division, under the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), works in concert with the Department’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) to identify and address opportunities for greater operational efficiencies across the Department.

Under the reorganization, a new Employee Wellness and Resiliency Division also was established under the CAO, which is addressing employees’ physical, nutritional, mental, financial, and spiritual well-being. As detailed in our recent report to the Subcommittee, the Department’s plan to deliver wellness solutions includes conducting a comprehensive assessment of employee needs, and an inclusive strategy to provide a variety of resources. For example, the Department has partnered with the House Wellness Center, which was established by the House

Chief Administrative Officer, to facilitate USCP employees' access to the House's online and in-person wellness offerings.

Our wellness program is being designed to help employees understand their current health and financial wellness status; set realistic goals; provide personalized guidance, and identify resources to ensure success in their health and well-being journeys. It also will include access to a personal trainer in the USCP gyms; experts to provide advice on healthy eating habits; money management seminars on creating household budgets and spending plans, and an early-intervention program and peer-to-peer support program. The holistic wellness program also aims to expand and promote Department policies and programs that support work-life balance, such as the alternative work schedule and telework policies.

As for the Department's financial wellness, I am pleased to report that the Department received its eighth consecutive unmodified "clean" opinion on our Fiscal Year 2019 financial statements from the OIG. The OIG plays a very important role in assisting the Department in improving our operations and performance by conducting audits, reviews, and investigations, and making recommendations for business improvements. The resolution of OIG recommendations regarding the Department's internal controls and business processes is among the top priorities of our leadership team, as evidenced by the creation of our new Internal Controls and Risk Management Division. Since 2006, when the OIG was established, the Department has successfully closed 92 percent of the OIG's recommendations.

Over the past several months, we also have been updating the Department's Strategic Plan to prioritize key strategic goals and objectives within the current security and fiscal environments for the next five years. These goals include optimizing readiness; threat identification and mitigation; supporting our employees from the day they are hired to the day they retire, and promoting accountability. Our strategic planning process has included valuable input from our sworn and civilian colleagues, and when finalized, also will reflect Legislative Branch stakeholders' priorities.

Addressing Threats to Maintain Highest Level of Readiness

Mr. Chairman, we consistently work to maintain the level of protection necessary to balance access and security. Over the past year, the Department screened millions of individuals at building entrances and interior checkpoints, effectively integrating and implementing the use of our pre-screener officers at posts outside of the House and Senate office buildings, coupled with our House Garage security perimeter plan. In this fiscal year alone, we have managed an ever-increasing number of demonstrations, including large demonstrations each Friday for 14 weeks starting last October; have secured and supported a Lying in State ceremony; saved dozens of lives using our specialized training and equipment; secured historic House hearings and Senate sessions; have swiftly responded to critical incidents and civil disobedience; and have investigated numerous, credible threats against Members of Congress and the U.S. Capitol.

In our efforts to address new and emerging threats and to maintain the highest level of readiness, the Department works closely with the Capitol Police Board to augment and strengthen its off-campus security and Member protection. We routinely collaborate with the House and Senate Sergeants at Arms to assess Members' state and district office security, and we provide recommendations on ways to improve and enhance security measures and practices inside and outside of the National Capital Region.

We also continue to provide security awareness briefings for both local and district staff. I am pleased to note that the number of security awareness briefings requested by Member offices has nearly tripled since Calendar Year 2017. We appreciate that there is a heightened awareness among Members and their staffs about their personal security, and that they are building partnerships with the USCP to further ensure their safety. The Department greatly appreciates the Capitol Police Board's support in these efforts, as their outreach to Member offices allows the Department to better serve Congress's needs.

Since Calendar Year 2017, the number of threats we have investigated has increased by more than 75 percent. Our special agents are aggressively pursuing all leads and investigating threats from many sources. As a result of their efforts, we have also seen the number of threat cases that we have closed by arrest increase significantly.

In just the past six months, the USCP has thwarted a number of serious and credible threats against Members that have led to numerous arrests across the country as well as national headlines.

- “Toledo Man Charged with Making Threats Against a Member of Congress and illegally Having Ammunition,” August 9, 2019 (WTOL-Toledo)
- “Kissimmee Man Sentenced to 15 Months for Threatening to Behead Sen. Bernie Sanders,” August 23, 2019 (*Osceola News-Gazette*)
- “Man Arrested in Connection to Threats to Arkansas Congressman,” October 1, 2019 (*Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*)
- “Man Accused of Threatening Federal Agent and Members of Congress,” November 26, 2019 (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*)
- “Man Sentenced to Prison for Threats to Slay U.S. Representative, His Staff,” December 20, 2019 (*Cape May County Herald*)

Just as important, based on the thoroughness of our investigations, these cases are being successfully prosecuted and tried by our law enforcement partners in U.S. Attorney’s Offices across the country.

In addition, the number of coordination activities where the Department engages with other law enforcement agencies to provide security for Members at off-campus events increased by more than 200 percent from Calendar Year 2017 to Calendar Year 2019. This is due in part because of our concentrated effort to increase Member protection within the National Capital Region, and our work with our local, state, and federal law enforcement partners throughout the country to coordinate security arrangements for Members while they are at public events in their home districts.



August 23, 2019; Roll Call



December 6, 2019; Merced (California) Sun-Star



September 6, 2019; Quartz

This summer, the Department will be playing a critical role in both the Democratic National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the Republican National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. Each of these events requires extensive planning and resources from the USCP. Because the USCP has significant experience in handling major events of this nature, and has a proven track record of successfully coordinating these events with the various agencies and committees involved, the Department has been invited to take a leading role at the executive steering committee planning sessions for each of the conventions. As an active partner in the overall event security planning, we have forged excellent relationships with our executive steering committee partners, and our efforts will only enhance our efforts to protect Members of Congress beyond the Capitol Complex.

Investing in a Secure Future

In order to continue to be a leader within federal law enforcement, and to get ahead of potential threats rather than reacting to them, we have developed our Fiscal Year 2021 budget request with an emphasis on providing specialized training for our employees as well as investing in the tools and technologies we need to maintain the highest level of readiness.

Our Fiscal Year 2021 budget request is \$516.7 million, and represents an increase of 11.2 percent over Fiscal Year 2020 enacted levels to meet mandatory salary requirements, provide overtime for critical training, ensure the security of the 2021 Presidential Inauguration, and address other mission-related expenses. Our budget request does not include a request for additional FTEs, however, we are facing increasing personnel costs due to outside requirements.

Specifically, our request includes \$7.9 million to cover an increase in benefits costs related to an increase in the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) rate for the USCP. The FY 2021 request does not include potential increases resulting from P.L. 116-94, *Adjustment to Normal Cost Percentage Rates*. Following OPM's establishment of the USCP's "normal-cost percentage" level, the Department will provide the Subcommittee with revised FY 2021 salaries request data, as necessary. In addition, we are requesting \$7.8 million for FY 2021 COLA and related benefits costs.

As the members of the Subcommittee are aware, the Department's current sworn staffing levels do not provide the complete and necessary resources to meet all of our mission requirements within the established sworn officer utility or the number of work-hours in a year that each officer is available to perform work. This utility number is used to determine overall staffing requirements. It balances the utility of available staff with annual salary and overtime funding along with known mission requirements. These known requirements include post coverage and projected unscheduled events such as demonstrations, late-night sessions, and holiday concerts. The utility number also estimates unfunded requirements that occur after the budget is enacted, such as unforeseen critical emergency situations, and providing adequate police coverage of Congressional hearings.

Because of the need to fill the mission requirement gap through overtime, the Department must also utilize overtime to ensure that officers can be offline for training, while meeting our daily mission requirements. There are flexibilities that other law enforcement agencies have to offset or defer daily requirements to allow for officer training that our unique mission does not afford us.

Therefore, mission requirements in excess of available personnel must be addressed through the identification of efficiencies such as post realignment and/or reductions, technology, and cutbacks within the utility. Where necessary, we meet this requirement through the use of overtime.

On January 20, 2021, the U.S. Capitol once again will be the center of global attention as it hosts the Presidential Inauguration. Our planning is underway and our FY 2021 budget request includes \$2.72 million for overtime for Inaugural security-related activities. An additional \$47.5 million for overtime will cover base mission requirements, the support of non-reimbursable events at the Library of Congress, and the ability for sworn employees to be backfilled while they attend mandatory and essential training.

According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), "police agencies nationwide have experienced increasing levels of staff turnover and difficulty in recruiting new

officers. The problem is compounded by experienced officers, who have been the core of their agencies' operations for years, who are retiring.”

While we are competing with other law enforcement agencies across the country to find and hire qualified applicants, we continue to work hard to attract the necessary level of highly-qualified candidates to hire without having to compromise our hiring standards. The women and men who make up our recruit classes are the top one percent of the candidates who have applied to work with us. Our recruiting staff has been very successful in reaching out to colleges and universities, as well as exploring other avenues, to meet and recruit very diverse groups of applicants.

It is not enough to simply attract the best and the brightest. As Chief, it is my responsibility to ensure that we continue to invest in our employees by providing them with the training they need to grow personally and professionally; to obtain and upgrade key equipment and systems they need to do their jobs efficiently and effectively; and to give them the proper tools to ensure that they achieve and maintain a well-rounded career with the Department. As the Department continues to grow and transform to address new and emerging threats, new technologies are essential tools in our ability to maintain a high level of readiness and to compete with other law enforcement agencies.

The IACP also has noted that, “Technology impacts every aspect of the law enforcement profession and is constantly evolving.” This includes communications, information management, enforcement technologies, forensics, operations, cyber-crimes, digital evidence, and emerging technologies such as drone mitigation and autonomous vehicles.

For the Department's General Expenses budget, our FY 2021 budget request includes items such as protective travel; hiring, outfitting, and training new sworn personnel; supplies and security equipment; event management, and other non-personnel needs. We are requesting \$99.5 million for general expenses, which is an increase of \$14.2 million over the FY 2020 enacted level.

A large part of our General Expenses budget will be invested in our people and the tools they need to do their jobs successfully. We plan to use these funds to upgrade our network and infrastructure equipment, computer hardware and software, and specialty equipment. We are also going to provide our sworn personnel with specialized training in order to commit more resources to our threat detection and prevention efforts where their focus is on keeping the Members of Congress and the Capitol Complex safe and secure.

Also included in our FY 2021 budget request is \$3.6 million in No-Year funding to support the replacement of the antiquated annunciator system that was installed shortly after the September 11, 2001, and the October 2001 anthrax attacks. The current system is obsolete, is no longer supported, and replacement parts are no longer available. As the threats continue to change, so too should the tools we use to communicate with the Congressional community. It is imperative that we provide appropriate information and instructions during security incidents, and we continue to refine our communications equipment, efforts, and protocols.

The new system, the Joint Audible Warning System, has been a joint effort among the House and Senate Sergeants at Arms, the Architect of the Capitol, and the USCP to provide a new, state-of-the-art, encrypted audible warning system throughout the Capitol Complex. This No-Year funding will cover the USCP's share of the total acquisition cost and the initial purchase of receiver end units.

Mr. Chairman, while physical security elements are an important part of any operations plan, I want to again reiterate that our officers who are on the job 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, are our greatest assets in helping to prevent threats and responding to any crisis.

I understand that Congress expects the USCP to be fiscally responsible in carrying out our mission. We have made every effort to identify efficiencies throughout the Department. With our recent structural reorganization and strategic planning efforts, we are strengthening our reporting relationships, promoting greater accountability, fostering dynamic succession planning, increasing efficiencies, and further empowering our people to ensure that our critical mission continues to be successful.

However, to ensure that the USCP is always at the ready to keep the Capitol Complex safe and secure, it is important that we make these crucial investments in our people and our resources at this time. Our Fiscal Year 2021 budget request was developed with great thought and discipline to ensure that the necessary mission requirements were at the forefront of our planning and prioritization.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I often tell my colleagues that it takes special people to answer the call to public service. In choosing a career with the United States Capitol Police, we all make a commitment to serving our country, the Congress, and our Department. What unites us is our dedication to keeping everyone protected and secure. Our team continues to impress me with their professionalism and commitment each and every day whether it is conducting security screening, providing valuable mission support behind the scenes, responding to an emergency, or participating in an historic event.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to discuss our FY 2021 budget request, our priorities, and activities. We will continue to work closely with you and the Subcommittee to ensure that we meet the needs and expectations of the Congress, and continue to successfully accomplish our mission today, while preparing for the challenges and the opportunities of tomorrow.