

**Formal Statement of J. Thomas Manger,
Chief, United States Capitol Police**

before the

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

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HEARING:

U.S. Capitol Police FY 2026 Budget Hearing

Chairman Valadao, Ranking Member Espaillat, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the United States Capitol Police (USCP or Department) budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Subcommittee for its consistent support of the women and men of the U.S. Capitol Police. They courageously carry out their duties of protecting the Members of Congress, the Capitol Complex, and the legislative process day in and day out. I am proud of the work they do.

Over the past four years, the USCP has experienced tremendous growth. Since joining the Department in 2021, there have been significant changes to increase the Department's staffing levels, enhance its security posture, modernize technology, streamline administrative processes, and boost employee morale. This transformation has taken time because the changes have been significant. But we are not done yet.

I need to acknowledge, at the outset, that the Department's FY 2026 budget request is substantial – it is close to one billion dollars. I recognize there are other police departments of a similar size whose budget is not as large as ours, but we are not an ordinary law enforcement agency. The USCP is not like traditional police departments. In fact, our mission incorporates elements of many federal law enforcement agencies. We are part FBI, U.S. Secret Service, and Federal Protective Services. Moreover, while the officers that you see on and around the Capitol Complex represent a large portion of the Department's workforce, the full scope of our duties far exceeds that of the officers and agents stationed at physical posts. Much of the work performed by the Department's staff – both sworn and civilian – goes beyond Capitol Grounds. The Department's responsibilities to Members and the Congressional community include protective details nation-wide and abroad, threat investigations, criminal investigations, campus-wide physical and technical security measures, intelligence analysis and reporting, canine security, offsite delivery screening, and hazardous incident response, among others.

This work is further supported by the vast array of administrative duties that are the foundation of the Department's workforce – to include training and wellness programs, policy development and implementation, inspections and internal controls, IT services, facilities and logistics, fleet management and maintenance, financial management, procurement, human resources, and background investigations. This work is critical to the Department's functioning but is often not seen or appreciated.

Significantly, much of these mission requirements simply did not exist prior to January 6, 2021. I cannot sufficiently emphasize that point. Following the events of that day, the Department's mission expanded exponentially and continues to expand. As a result of the 103 recommendations issued by the U.S. Capitol Police Inspector General (OIG), the Department had to respond to and implement recommendations that spanned the gamut in complexity, from equipping every officer with riot gear, to developing Department-wide policies, to expanding event planning and coordination efforts, to strengthening the Department's training functions. As a result of these recommendations, the Department has taken on new responsibilities, and created new divisions and teams, that did not previously exist in the Department. Recommendations of this scope and magnitude typically take years and years to implement; the Department did so on an expedited timeline.

Other factors have also contributed – and continue to contribute – to the Department’s expanding mission set. Congress requested that the Department undertake a top-to-bottom survey of its operations, and as result, the Department commissioned the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) assessment, which issued recommendations in three key areas – staffing, technology, and training. The Department responded in record time with an implementation strategy to make those recommendations a reality.

Member security concerns and major operational planning have driven the need for additional resources and staffing. The increased threat climate is perhaps one of the biggest drivers of the Department’s continuing need for additional resources. The past year alone saw threats against Members increase to a staggering 9,400 in one year – more than double over the past ten years. That is a huge increase, and given the current political climate, one that is likely to continue an upward trend. The current threat environment has resulted in additional Member protective responsibilities, which have increased by 27 percent since 2023; continuation of sunset details and the addition of short-term threat-based details; increased requests for Member escorts and security monitoring at regional airports; additional Technical Surveillance Countermeasures inspections, which have increased by nearly 400 percent since 2021; Member Residential and Capitol Complex security assessments, which have almost doubled since 2021; and requests for law enforcement coordination assessments, which have increased by 159 percent since FY 2022.

The Department’s reorganization, another OIG recommendation, created a new, stand-alone Intelligence Services Bureau, which collects and analyzes all sources of intelligence to identify domestic and international threats, and coordinates information sharing with the intelligence community. The reorganization also created a third office – the Office of Standards and Training Operations – which allows the Department to centralize its training, policy development, and inspections and controls functions, all recommendations issued by the OIG.

The Department also created additional operational components, such as the Rapid Response Team, which provides a dedicated patrol team that can be rapidly deployed to support events and demonstrations, critical incidents, or calls for service; additional civil disturbance units that allow for increased activations to enhance our security posture; and significantly, the Protective Intelligence Operations Center (PIOC), a state-of-the art fusion center for the intake and coordination of Member threats, related investigations, and the newly established residential security program.

None of these components existed four years ago – they are all new. And the implementation of each new program required staffing, research and analysis, IT support, procurement, budgeting, and where appropriate, new equipment, vehicle fleet, and other support services, both on the sworn and civilian sides of the Department. All these actions were necessary, but not always seen.

I. Background

To properly evaluate the Department’s FY 2026 request, it is important to conduct a brief retrospective of the Department’s evolution these past four years. In 2021, the Department faced

a trifecta of significant challenges: critically low sworn staffing levels, the need to re-open the Capitol campus post-pandemic, and remediating over one hundred audit recommendations issued by the OIG and other oversight entities following the events of January 6. These were large-scale challenges the Department had to confront simultaneously and within a compressed timeframe, significantly taxing a workforce already severely understaffed. Morale and work-life balance suffered significantly.

Recognizing the need to prioritize staffing, in FY 2022, the Department launched a comprehensive sworn hiring strategy to increase its sworn bench strength. The plan evolved into a multi-year hiring and training strategy that established a hiring target of 288 new sworn recruits each fiscal year that is designed to take into account the lag time between recruit hiring and full utility, which is approximately ten months. An integral part of the strategy is creating and developing a “pipeline” of uniformed officers to support operational requirements to allow more experienced officers to qualify for internal, specialized positions throughout the Department.

The impact of this hiring strategy started to yield results in FY 2022 when sworn hiring began to outpace attrition. However, an additional challenge emerged that further impacted Department staffing: the expanding threat environment. This dynamic called for enhancements to the Department’s security posture, and by extension, the need for increased staffing in the Department’s protective operations. In response, the Department expanded its hiring strategy to include 63 additional, external positions to directly support the Protective and Intelligence Operations (P&IO) Office. These positions form part of the Department’s current FY 2026 budget request and focus on the onboarding of entry-level agents to support, primarily, dignitary protection and investigations.

II. Department’s FY2026 Budget Request

The Department’s FY 2026 budget request builds upon the accomplishments achieved over the past four years. It includes \$687 million to fund salaries and benefits, \$255 million to fund general expenses, and \$25 million in multi-year funding to support the continuation of the Department’s mutual aid program. This budget request reflects the Department’s priorities in three critical areas: 1) Advancing Member Protection, 2) Optimizing the Workforce, and 3) Modernizing USCP Security and Technology.

a. Advancing Member Protection

The current climate of threats has reached alarming levels – in FY 2024 alone, the number of threats launched against Members of Congress exceeded 9,400. Members of Congress, their families, and staff face a range of threats, both on the Capitol campus and in their home districts, and the Department must be prepared to anticipate, mitigate, and respond. Social media and the internet provide a breeding ground for threats that, regardless of their nature, the Department must investigate. That effort requires human resources, which if the current trend continues, will only add to the need for staffing. This is a mission requirement of the highest priority. To maintain a posture of optimum readiness, the Department deploys resources that cast a wide protective net and requires staffing for: 1) Congressional delegations and other special events inside and outside the continental United States; 2) security awareness briefings to

Member offices; 3) criminal investigations; 4) execution of search and arrest warrants nationwide; 5) Technical Surveillance Countermeasures inspections; 6) residential security; 7) committee hearing security coverage; 8) deployment of threat-based protective details; and other operational mission requirements to keep Members, family, and staff out of harm's way.

The Department must continue to adapt and take proactive measures to stay one step ahead of criminal actors. A significant step in that direction was the establishment of the PIOC. It serves as a centralized command center for Member protection, integrating intelligence, threat assessment, and other related protective operations. The FY 2026 budget seeks funding to continue PIOC operations and provide comprehensive and effective security measures in response to the current and future threat environment.

The Department's Member protection responsibilities, however, do not end at the Capitol campus' borders. The Department is statutorily entrusted with nation-wide protective responsibilities, requirements that it cannot undertake without the support and resources of partner law enforcement agencies. Thus, the Department is asking Congress to renew the mutual aid funding it extended in the Emergency Security Supplemental Appropriations Act¹ to reimburse law enforcement partners for providing mutual aid. The Prime Minister of Israel's visit in July 2024 illustrated the effectiveness of this program, when hundreds of officers from ten different law enforcement agencies joined with the USCP to secure the Joint Meeting of Congress. The mutual aid program also provides additional protective detail coverage to enhance Members' security in their home districts by coordinating with state and local law enforcement to provide residential security and support events.

b. Optimizing the Workforce

The Department has made unprecedented efforts to increase its sworn workforce, and we are extremely grateful to Congress for the support that made it possible. But if the Department is to perform the vast range of services the Congress rightfully expects, the Department needs the resources to properly do the job. Thus, the Department can only carry out its 24/7, no-fail mission through the dedicated commitment of *all* Department employees – sworn and civilian. The Department's civilian workforce supports not only administrative functions, including procurement, budget and financial management, logistics and fleet management, human resources, background investigations, information technology, policy, internal controls, and training, but also fills critical operational functions within the Department, including roles that support the Command Center, event planning and emergency response, hazardous incident response, vehicle screening, training, physical security and technical countermeasures, threat assessments, and intelligence and investigative analysis. Although rarely seen, the civilian workforce is the invisible hand that supports every aspect of the Department's operations.

The Department has made tremendous strides in hiring, and it was accomplished through your direct support. As a result of this hiring strategy, the Department has hired over 900 officers, resulting in a net increase of approximately 360 sworn personnel after factoring in attrition. By continuing this strategy, the Department expects to reach approximately 2,530 sworn personnel by the end of FY 2026. While this represents optimal staffing levels, the

¹ P.L. 117-31

Department needs to continue efforts to balance its workload, specifically between Uniformed Operations and Protective and Intelligence Operations. By the end of FY 2027, I feel confident that the Department will reach target sworn staffing levels across its organizational entities.

c. Modernizing USCP Security and Technology

The FY 2026 budget seeks fundings for the continued maintenance of existing security systems, investment in new technologies, cybersecurity, and stakeholder priorities. The demand for security measures across the Capitol Complex has increased and requires funding to ensure access controls, video surveillance, intrusion alarms, duress, and other systems are effectively designed, installed, and maintained. The increasingly complex and dynamic nature of the Department's physical and technical security program requires the Department to conduct research into new technologies, including the appropriate use of artificial intelligence to enhance security capabilities across the Capitol Complex. The FY 2026 budget request seeks funding to continue these critical modernization initiatives.

III. Conclusion

The Department is tasked with ensuring that Members, the Capitol Complex, staff, and visitors remain safe and secure, and must do so on a campus that is entirely open and accessible to all. There is no other federal government building with a comparable public access policy. The Department must be positioned to respond to the needs of Members and the security of the Capitol Complex on a no-fail basis. I recognize the fiscal environment we are in, but the Department cannot provide all the services requested and required if it is not sufficiently funded.

In just a few years, the Department will celebrate its 200th anniversary, and I have every confidence that, with continued commitment, planning, strategic vision, and Congressional support, the Department will continue its upward trajectory of excellence in the fulfillment of its protective mission over Congress, Members, staff, visitors, and the legislative process.

I want to sincerely thank the Members of this Committee for your trust and support these past four years. It is through our joint partnership that the Department has achieved such transformational change.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.