

# OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS

**Statement Before the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch  
Committee on House Appropriations  
FY 2027 Budget Submission**

**The Honorable William P. McFarland  
Sergeant at Arms**

*March 17, 2026*



## Opening

Good morning Chairman Valadao, Ranking Member Espaillat, and Members of the Committee. I appreciate the invitation to appear before you today to testify in support of the fiscal year (FY) 2027 budget request for the Office of the Sergeant at Arms (SAA), which totals \$147,281,000 and 211 full-time equivalents (FTEs); an increase of \$6.675 million, or 4.75% and 5 FTEs, from the FY 2026 enacted level.

Since becoming Sergeant at Arms three years ago, my focus has been clear: strengthen the security of Members and their families while improving the safety of and service to the House community. Over that time, we have made substantial progress on both fronts.

### **We have worked to make Members and their families safer through:**

- The launch of the Member Personal Security Program, which makes available to every Member \$20,000 per month for protection and security services.
- The deployment of a Mobile Duress application to provide Members with an additional safety tool when they are away from the Capitol complex.
- Enhancements to the Residential Security Program, strengthening the protections available at Members' homes.
- The launch of the SAA Secure Member Portal, creating a centralized platform where Members and their offices can access security resources and services.
- The establishment of the Member Cybersecurity Program focused on Member data privacy, helping Members and their families mitigate risks related to personal data exposure.

### **We have worked to make the House community safer through:**

- The expansion of the Stop the Bleed Program, improving medical emergency preparedness across the campus.
- Significant advancement of the Joint Audible Warning System (JAWS) Program to ensure critical information reaches every part of the House campus during an emergency.
- Strengthened coordination with the United States Capitol Police (USCP) while onboarding a new Chief.



- Advancement and execution of several high-impact physical security projects around campus, including upgrades to doors and windows.

While we are proud of the progress made over the past three years, our focus now is on strengthening these programs and continuing to build the capabilities that Members and the House community will rely on in the years ahead. To name just a few, we aim to drive the completion of a Capitol screening facility, upgrading House Sensitive Compartmented Information Facilities (SCIFs), and completing development of a SAA Common Operating Picture capability.

Alongside each of these major initiatives, we remain committed to delivering the highest level of service to the House community every day. This includes preparations for the 120th Congress, which are already well under way to ensure that new Members understand and can easily enroll in our programs from day one.

This work collectively drives our three Strategic Goals, **Cultivate Excellence in People**, **Exceed Service Expectations**, and **Innovate Ahead**, which remain the backbone of this FY 2027 budget request.

## **Cultivate Excellence in People**

Our first Strategic Goal for this Congress reflects our dedication to the organization's most important asset—our people. We strive to attract, empower, and develop a respected, dynamic workforce through a high-standard culture of trust and respect.

Included in the FY 2027 budget request, the SAA is requesting \$23.75 million in support of 211 FTEs, an increase of five FTEs from the FY 2026 enacted level. These new FTEs support our operations and coordination for Member-attended events, provide dedicated personnel to critical continuity programs, and support the growing volume, complexity, and strategic importance of data within the SAA. In addition to base salaries, this figure includes a projected cost of living adjustment (COLA), longevity increases, and \$200,000 for meritorious increases to be awarded as part of the SAA's performance management program. Additionally, as part of the non-personnel request, the SAA is requesting \$345,000 to continue providing training and professional development opportunities and investments in the workforce. This builds on recent progress to strengthen the SAA workforce, including standardizing job descriptions across the organization and providing a pathway for in-seat promotions. Together, these efforts are directly improving how we support and empower employees.

## **Exceed Service Expectations**



Our second Strategic Goal for this Congress is centered on our service to the Congressional community. We strive to ensure exceptional, secure, and positive experiences by strengthening the culture of accountability and building strong relationships. Put simply, we seek to exceed the expectations you have of us.

SAA has worked diligently with this Committee, House Leadership, the Committee on House Administration, USCP, and our other institutional partners to mitigate the threats that Members of Congress face. In 2025, we saw a continued increase in threats directed toward Members of Congress. USCP investigated 14,938 threat assessment cases—a 57.7% increase over the 9,474 cases handled in 2024.

At the start of FY 2026, SAA expanded the lifetime limits of the Residential Security Program and started a Personal Security Program for Members directly. Given the lifetime increases for residential security, we anticipate an additional 200 installations throughout the calendar year. For FY 2027, we are requesting a slight 2%, or \$2.1 million, increase to our Residential Security Program. This request reflects a reasonable estimate of costs required based on current adoption trends. We will continue to closely monitor program usage and adjust future budget requests based on actual adoption.

In addition to the Residential Security Program, we are requesting a 2.5%, or \$2.8 million, increase to the District Office Security Program. We are projecting to install 150 security systems in calendar year 2026 and the increase in FY 2027 will support the transition to the 120<sup>th</sup> Congress.

SAA, in partnership with the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, continues to provide cybersecurity support to Members. Since October 2024, when this program was established, a majority of Members have enrolled. We are projecting an additional 75 participants over the course of FY 2026. In FY 2027, the SAA budget request includes \$441,000 to support this initiative.

Furthermore, in response to direction from this Committee and funding support, SAA implemented a Mobile Duress Program for Members. After a successful pilot program in FYs 2024 and 2025, the SAA launched the program at the start of this fiscal year and participation in the program has steadily grown since. The SAA looks to use this tool as a way of expanding the security umbrella and protective communications for Members of Congress. Our FY 2027 budget request includes \$2.0 million for continuation of the Mobile Duress Program.

Also included in the budget request is funding for the SAA to continue to provide, in conjunction with USCP, in-person Security Awareness Briefings in Members' districts. Security Awareness Briefings provide Members and staff with an overview of how to respond to typical



security issues that an office encounters and include security best practices. Since I began as Acting Sergeant at Arms in 2023, SAA has delivered 391 Security Awareness Briefings in partnership with law enforcement agencies around the country, including 157 in 2025 alone. The FY 2027 budget request includes \$150,000 for Security Awareness Briefings and \$60,000 to visit district offices to provide information on security systems, mail hoods, and other security functions.

Lastly, the SAA FY 2027 budget request funds several recurring and new initiatives that help keep the SAA in a ready state to ensure the security of the House. Some of these initiatives include:

- \$1.6 million for the 20% annual lifecycle replacement of the emergency escape hoods;
- \$1.0 million to begin necessary security enhancements to SCIFs in accordance with the new standards as prescribed in Intelligence Community Directive 705;
- \$830,000 for the House's cost share and cloud migration of WebEOC, a tool leveraged by the House, Senate, Architect of the Capitol, and USCP to support incident management and situational awareness; and
- \$500,000 for the annual maintenance and continued modernization of the House Operations Center.

As Chairman of the Capitol Police Board, it is my goal that both the SAA and USCP continue strengthening the culture of accountability and building strong relationships to foster a safe environment on Capitol Hill and in district offices for Members of Congress, staffs, and visitors.

## **Innovate Ahead**

Our final Strategic Goal for this Congress accounts for the need to forecast and continuously adapt to the needs of the Congressional community. We strive to leverage technology and adaptive processes to drive innovation and proactively anticipate evolving needs.

The budget request includes funds to modernize the House Chamber visitor experience and to aid communication with foreign visitors to the House galleries. This includes an initiative to translate guidance and signage covering prohibited items in the galleries, the gallery rules, and historic information about the Hall of the House.

Additionally, the budget request supports SAA's initiative to modernize and upgrade its badge management system, a central component of issuing House identification badges to House and Architect of the Capitol staff and contractors. Lastly, the budget request continues the SAA's work to expand a Human Resources Information System (HRIS), modernizing the ways



in which we process time and attendance, conduct performance management, and onboard new employees.

These requests build on our continuing progress to modernize our internal systems and improve how we serve the House. Recent accomplishments—including the rollout of a centralized work management platform to better coordinate work across SAA Divisions, the launch of the SAA Hub as a centralized internal resource, and the initial establishment of HRIS—are helping create a more efficient and responsive organization. As we look ahead to the 120<sup>th</sup> Congress and the 2028 nominating conventions, SAA will continue to explore all available tools and resources to best execute our Mission.

## Closing

In closing, the FY 2027 SAA budget request has been prepared in the spirit of zero-based budgeting, remaining fiscally responsible without jeopardizing mission-critical services provided to the House community. For FY 2027, the Office of the SAA requests a total of \$147,281,000. This includes \$23,757,000 for personnel expenses to fund 211 FTEs, as well as \$123,524,000 for non-personnel items.

My office is fully committed to delivering top-tier, non-partisan security services for Members, their families, and staff. We recognize the immense responsibility entrusted to us and are dedicated to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and efficiency.

I look forward to working with this Committee and my fellow House Officers here today, and I welcome any questions you may have.