



**National
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.*



**Greater Washington
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.*

September 18, 2025

The Honorable James Comer
Chair
House Committee on Oversight
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Garcia
Ranking Member
House Committee on Oversight
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Comer and Ranking Member Garcia:

As President & CEO of the National Urban League and President & CEO of the Greater Washington Urban League, we urge members of this committee to use their time during today's hearing, "Oversight of the District of Columbia" to discuss the myriad ways that Congress could helpfully support the Mayor and the D.C. Council in building a safe, thriving community.

In the past, hearings focused on the District of Columbia have produced narratives that are not only factually inaccurate, but also politically motivated, racially coded, and historically rooted.

A capitol city is supposed to reflect the soul of the nation. From the monuments and memorials to the cultural institutions and the neighborhood businesses, Washington, D.C. is a place where the American identity has been built, tested, and transformed.

Instead of investing in the success of our nation's capital, some Members of Congress have promoted the idea that a federal takeover is necessary to ensure safety and security in the District, while prohibiting the local D.C. government from accessing approximately \$1.1 Billion in local taxpayer funds.¹ Meanwhile, the Trump administration is canceling millions in life-saving grant funding previously committed

¹ See Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act of 2025, Pub. L. 119-4 (2025) (treats the District of Columbia as a federal agency for FY25 appropriations), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1968/text>; see also District of Columbia Local Funds Act of 2025, S.1077, 119th Cong. § 2 (2025), a bill to appropriate FY25 local funds to the District of Columbia for programs and activities included in the District's Fiscal Year 2025 Local Budget Act of 2024, (passed unanimously by the Senate on March 14, 2025), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/1077/all-actions>; see also Aris Folley, *Congress poised to force \$1B cut to local DC budget, surprising many lawmakers*, THE HILL (Mar. 13, 2025), <https://thehill.com/business/budget/5194022-dc-budget-cut-funding-bill/>.

to D.C. public schools², violence interruption programs³, housing for low-income residents⁴, and healthcare⁵.

In fact, this week the House of Representatives is pushing ahead with a vote on a package of bills that will erode the rights and dignity of D.C. residents under the guise of “law and order”.⁶ Bills like the DC CRIMES Act of 2025 (H.R. 4922)⁷, the District of Columbia Policing Protection Act of 2025 (H.R. 5143)⁸, and District of Columbia Juvenile Sentencing Reform Act (H.R. 5140)⁹, will undo the progress the city has made towards reducing street crime, which is at a historic 30-year-low.¹⁰

The challenges cities like D.C. face, from public safety to housing, from education to economic inclusion, demand comprehensive solutions and collaborative leadership. What they do not need are politically charged narratives that demonize communities and invite federal overreach. In the past month, misleading statements from national leadership describing the District as overtaken by “violent gangs,” “roving mobs of wild youth,” and “drugged-out maniacs” coupled with deployment of the National Guard and additional federal law enforcement personnel evoked a familiar and troubling pattern that will not end in the District.¹¹

² Mark Lieberman, *Trump Cancels Dozens of Education Grants—with More Terminations on the Horizon*, EDUCATION WEEK (Aug. 27, 2025), <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/trump-cancels-dozens-of-education-grants-with-more-terminations-on-the-horizon/2025/08>.

³ Alexis Wainwright, *DC violence prevention programs at risk after federal funding cuts*, WUSA9 (May 7, 2025), <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/community/dc-violence-prevention-programs-federal-funding-cuts/65-225d90c6-048d-4cd4-b092-57f537b3ee32>.

⁴ See U.S. DEP’T OF HOUS. AND URBAN DEV., OFFICE OF PUB. AND INDIAN HOUS., Notice PIH 2025-07, Emergency Housing Vouchers Leasing (Revised) (2025), <https://www.hud.gov/sites/default/files/OCHCO/documents/2025-07pihn.pdf>; see also Jenna Lee *Hundreds in D.C. could lose housing assistance as federal funds end*, STREET SENSE MEDIA (July 9, 2025), <https://streetsensemedia.org/article/dc-housing-voucher-cuts-2026/>.

⁵ See *State of Colorado v. HHS*, 1:25-cv-00121 (D. R.I. filed April 1, 2025), <https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/court-filings/colorado-et-al-v-us-department-of-health-and-human-services-et-al-complaint-2025.pdf> (alleging that the U.S Department of Health and Human Services began clawing back more than \$11 Billion in previously allocated funding to the states and the District of Columbia for public health, mental health, and addiction services on March 25, 2025, in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act).

⁶ Press Release, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Comer Announces Full Committee Markup of Legislation to Ensure a Safe and Prosperous District of Columbia (Sept. 5, 2025) (available at <https://oversight.house.gov/release/comer-announces-full-committee-markup-of-legislation-to-ensure-a-safe-and-prosperous-district-of-columbia/>).

⁷ DC CRIMES Act, H.R. 4922, 119th Cong. (2025), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/4922>.

⁸ District of Columbia Policing Protection Act, H.R. 5143, 119th Cong. (2025), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/5143>.

⁹ District of Columbia Juvenile Sentencing Reform Act, H.R. 5140, 119th Cong. (2025), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/5140>.

¹⁰ Press Release, Dep’t of Justice, Violent Crime in D.C. Hits 30 Year Low (Jan. 3, 2025) (available at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/violent-crime-dc-hits-30-year-low>).

¹¹ President Donald J. Trump, Press Conference Announcing Military Deployment in Washington (Aug. 11, 2025) (transcript available at <https://rollcall.com/factbase/trump/transcript/donald-trump-press->

This administration has already deployed the National Guard to Los Angeles and surged federal agents to Chicago; while officials escalate their rhetoric and threaten incursions into plurality Black and Brown cities represented by Black mayors, like Baltimore, New Orleans, Oakland, and Memphis. Today's hearing and the floor votes scheduled for the full House of Representatives are test cases for Members of Congress. We urge you to vote against any legislation that undermines the autonomy of these cities and focus on ways the federal government can meaningfully support local communities.

The residents of Washington, D.C. have consistently and explicitly petitioned this body for statehood, and yet, House leadership is determined to undermine the will of the people. We urge Members of Congress to center the marginalized communities they oversee by advancing real solutions and expanding access to economic opportunities. These are proven strategies that will improve life in the District, unlike deploying armed military personnel to the city's streets.

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George H. Lambert, Jr.
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Greater Washington Urban League

[conference-law-enforcement-washington-dc-august-11-2025/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2025/08/11/conference-law-enforcement-washington-dc-august-11-2025/)); see also Mike Bebernes, *Trump says D.C. has been 'overtaken' by crime. The data tells a different story.*, YAHOO NEWS (Aug. 12, 2025), <https://www.yahoo.com/news/us/article/trump-says-dc-has-been-overtaken-by-crime-the-data-tells-a-different-story-220200486.html>.