

STATEMENT OF CHIEF MATTHEW R. VERDEROSA  
UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

Committee on House Administration  
United States House of Representatives  
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Good evening, Mr. Chairman, Ranking-Member Brady, and members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the United States Capitol Police (USCP or Department) and our mission to protect the Congress so that it can fulfill its constitutional and legislative responsibilities in a safe, secure, and open environment. It is my honor to serve as Chief of Police, and I am honored to be with you today. I am joined here by some members of my Executive Team and Executive Management Team, including our Chief Administrative Officer, Richard Braddock; our General Counsel, Gretchen DeMar, and our new Chief of Operations, Assistant Chief Steven Sund.

As the Committee is aware, I recently conducted a comprehensive hiring process for a new Assistant Chief. For the first time in the modern era of the Department, the position was competed both internally and externally, as I firmly believe that competition drives excellence. Assistant Chief Sund comes to the USCP after serving for more than 25 years with the Washington Metropolitan Police Department. He brings significant senior command and operational experience to the Department, making him the ideal Chief of Operations for the USCP. While his tenure with us has been just four weeks, he has already had a positive impact on our operations. I am confident in his abilities to successfully lead our operational workforce.

Also joining me today is the Department's Inspector General, Fay Ropella; as well as USCP Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Chairman Gus Papathanasiou, and the USCP Teamsters Chair Karen Gray Thomas.

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by thanking the Committee for its steadfast support of the United States Capitol Police and its mission. The regular discussions that we have with you and your staff are greatly appreciated, as they allow us the opportunity to provide the Committee with important updates about our activities, challenges, and areas of focus. In addition, I am grateful for the Committee's engagement and feedback so that the Department may continue to effectively meet the needs of the U.S. House of Representatives and of the Congress. Additionally, I would like to thank the Capitol Police Board for its guidance and support as we carry out the complex security and law enforcement operations for the Capitol Complex.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the women and men of the United States Capitol Police. On a daily basis, they publicly demonstrate how the American freedoms that we hold dear are carried out in the Nation's Capital. They work tirelessly to ensure that the Congress is able to conduct its legislative responsibilities without disruption, all the while exhibiting the utmost respect for the Constitution and protection of First Amendment liberties. I am thoroughly impressed with their performance, which is both seen and unseen by the community. And, I am thankful for their commitment to constantly rise to the occasion and handling whatever comes our way. During my tenure as Chief, this has included a Presidential Inauguration, mass demonstrations, and ever-changing security threats.

Last May, I had the pleasure of appearing before this Committee to provide an overview of the Department's management plan for Fiscal Year 2017, and beyond. As I stated then, it is the responsibility of the USCP to do everything possible to protect and safeguard Members, staff, and visitors each day in an open and complex environment; as the threats and risks we face today are increasingly sophisticated and dynamic. In coordination with the Capitol Police Board and our Oversight Committees, the USCP developed a multi-year strategy that provided for growth of the Department to fulfill three critical new mission sets, in an effort to further enhance the successful long-term protection of the Capitol Complex. These mission sets were the result of comprehensive threat analyses, including intelligence gathered by our partners globally, and consisted of the following initiatives:

1. Enhancement of House Garage Security;
2. Pre-screener and additional over-watch personnel at various building access points;  
and,
3. Enhanced Portal Scanners Use

I am pleased to report that after reallocating internal resources to begin to address these emerging priorities, the Department has deployed the House Garage security screening initiative for approximately 60 percent of the House Office Buildings. By working in concert with the Architect of the Capitol's (AOC) Rayburn Garage Renovation Project, the Department is expected to complete the final stage of this initiative when specific security milestones are accomplished with the Rayburn Garage redesign and buildout in Fiscal Years 2018-2019. However, the staffing of security posts is dependent upon receipt of additional resources.

Additionally, the Department has begun to increase its capacity for pre-screeners and over-watch personnel at various building access points by leveraging new K-9 teams and Subject Interdiction Officer capabilities. This initiative will become more visible to the Congressional community in the coming months.

And to complete the list, the Department has had great success utilizing the enhanced portal screeners on visitors wishing to enter the House Chamber during major events, such as the State of the Union Address and Joint Meetings of Congress.

While additional resources will be necessary in out-years to complete these initiatives and to provide the necessary stationary posts, I remain confident in the Department's ability to meet these new mission sets within the next several years with the continued support of the Capitol Police Board and the Congress. I do want to note that the new responsibility assigned to the Department of protecting and securing the O'Neill House Office Building, which will take effect later this spring, will likely impact the overall schedule to complete these efforts. This new responsibility requires significant resources, and was not anticipated at the time the Department established its three primary security initiatives in early 2016.

With this in mind, I have been working closely with the Capitol Police Board, the House Sergeant at Arms, our Oversight Committees, our Chief of Operations and our Chief Administrative Officer to develop a plan to ensure the effects of the new mission will be shared across the Department, and not solely shouldered by the Uniformed Services Bureau's House Division. As with all law enforcement agencies, our most valuable assets are our employees. It

is my intention to ensure our House Division officers receive the support they need to remain balanced, focused, and sharp every day as this new mission set is enacted. The successful implementation of this initiative is also dependent on receiving the necessary resources. Further, once the Department has had the opportunity to benchmark and analyze the relevant data and trends following the addition of the new House Office Building to our critical security infrastructure, we will continue to look for efficiencies and examine the potential of reappportioning personnel, as appropriate.

Since becoming the Chief of Police in March 2016, one of my top priorities has been to ensure that each employee understands the vital role that each of them plays in safeguarding the Capitol Complex. We have the incredible distinction and duty in allowing the world to witness how democracy functions in a safe and open environment. No other police department in this nation does what we do or with the high visibility of our mission that we have.

This effort is being accomplished, in part, by simplifying processes; communicating more effectively internally, with our partner law enforcement agencies, and with our stakeholders; providing new training opportunities using a variety of mediums; and by partnering with other Legislative Branch organizations to more efficiently execute our mission.

In the past year, the Department has partnered with the U.S. House of Representatives (House), U.S. Senate (Senate), and the AOC to introduce a new Joint Emergency Mass Notification System (JEMNS) for the Congressional community. We also partnered with the House Chief Administrative Officer to redesign the USCP's website to provide a valuable

resource so that the Congressional community and visitors may better understand our mission and security expectations when visiting the Capitol Complex. The Department worked closely with House and Senate leadership on cutting edge security measures for the Capitol Complex, and we partnered with the AOC to open one of the most sophisticated and dynamically designed firearm ranges in the country, located in the Rayburn House Office Building. In addition, our Department's subject matter experts worked together to develop new online, roll call and/or in-service training for USCP personnel on topics such as the 58<sup>th</sup> Presidential Inauguration security, new time and attendance processes, legal updates and scenarios, defensive tactics, and tactical communication. Further, among our ongoing efforts to provide professional development opportunities to our workforce, we implemented a new, three-week, in-depth supervisory training program in fall 2016.

The Department also has been actively engaged in addressing and effecting recommendations from the USCP Office of Inspector General (OIG). Since 2006, the USCP OIG has made 334 recommendations and the Department has closed 291 of them by fully implementing the recommendations. In Fiscal Year 2016, the Department closed 33 recommendations and, to date, the Department has closed 16 audit recommendations this fiscal year. The USCP continues to work on the actions needed to close the 43 remaining open recommendations, as well as to facilitate the review of evidence for closure considerations by OIG staff. The Department truly values the recommendations proposed by Inspector General Ropella, and we appreciate the OIG's assistance in the Department's efforts to further improve operations and performance.

Mr. Chairman, earlier in my testimony I referenced our work to ensure that the 58<sup>th</sup> Presidential Inaugural ceremonies were secure and successful. Paramount to that success was the work of the USCP Inaugural Task Force (ITF). I would like to take a moment to recognize the ITF, under the command of Captain Sean Gallagher, for their professional and tireless efforts in the successful execution of the Department's security plan for this high-profile, national event. The ITF participated in 847 planning meetings, of which the ITF led 425, and provided nearly 50 briefings to our stakeholders and law enforcement partners, making this Inauguration the most coordinated and effectively communicated security event in the Department's history.

I could not be more proud of the ITF -- and of our entire workforce -- for flawlessly implementing the vast number of requirements to ensure this event represented our nation and our Capitol on the world stage in the most positive way possible.

I would also like to recognize the hard work of the women and men of the USCP who planned and successfully executed the security models for protecting Members of Congress at the National Conventions in Cleveland, Ohio, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They, too, did a tremendous job. And, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge our collaborative and professional partnerships with the U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Park Police, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Joint Force Headquarters National Capital Region, Metropolitan Police Department, and the local law enforcement agencies in the respective jurisdictions of the conventions. They are a pleasure to work with, and I firmly believe that our collective efforts further strengthen our working relationships.

Finally, I would like to provide a brief overview of where the USCP stands with our sworn leadership positions, and where I will be focusing my attention in the near-term.

In addition to incorporating Assistant Chief Sund into our ranks, over the past six months (to include imminent future promotions), the Department has been fortunate to be able to promote 35 Sergeants, 24 Lieutenants, and one Captain within our authorized sworn personnel strength; adding valuable experience to our supervisory ranks that were critically low. The infusion of these new supervisors has invigorated our workforce and, with additional promotions expected later this year, the Department is positioning itself with strong leaders who, in the near future, may rise through the Department rank structure. Additionally, in the near-term I will be formulating processes for the ranks of Deputy Chief, Inspector, and Captain to round out the USCP's executive and senior management teams.

In the coming months, I will also continue to focus on a number of initiatives including ushering in an enhanced Time and Attendance system that will provide greater efficiencies for the Department; developing and implementing specialized training for our sworn and civilian workforce; completing our sixth assessment to receive reaccreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA); strengthening the Department's intelligence gathering and dissemination; completing a full organizational review to determine the optimal structure of the Department; and lastly, continuing to leverage and improve upon various cyber technologies for the long-term viability of the Department's security systems.



While my list of priorities for 2017 is ambitious, under the leadership of Assistant Chief Steve Sund for operations and Richard Braddock for administration, I believe the Department is positioned for continued success, and I look forward to working with my entire team on accomplishing these important goals.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee today and for the Committee's continued support of the United States Capitol Police. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.