

**United States House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security**

**“Before the Whistle: Assessing Information Sharing and Security
Collaboration Ahead of Major Events”
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**Written Statement of Joseph Mabin
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Chairman Garbarino, Ranking Member Thompson, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on “Information Sharing and Security Collaboration Ahead of Major Events.”

My name is Deputy Chief Joseph Mabin, and I command the Patrol Bureau of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, which is a member of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. I lead the Department’s largest bureau within an agency of over 1,100 sworn law enforcement officers serving a city of more than half a million residents.

In less than 16 weeks, Kansas City is projected to welcome more than 650,000 visitors during the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Kansas City has hosted major events in the past—including championship parades and iconic American sporting events such as the MLB All-Star Game and the NFL Draft. However, this event will require the largest coordinated deployment of mutual aid partners in our city’s history.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup is the single largest sporting event in the world. For the Kansas City metropolitan area, it represents both an extraordinary opportunity and a historic operational challenge.

Kansas City is the smallest market among the 11 U.S. host cities, yet we will operate one of the largest overall footprints. We will host six matches and four team base camps, including three of the top ten ranked teams in the world. In addition, Kansas City is planning an ambitious FIFA Fan Festival that will operate for 18 days throughout the tournament.

Our tournament footprint spans ten counties across two states—Missouri and Kansas. This bi-state effort requires a unified approach to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. Crossing state lines adds complexity to communication and coordination, making seamless information sharing essential.

The scope and visibility of this event require thoughtful, comprehensive planning. Safety and security remain our top priorities. Our goal is to deliver a safe, seamless, and welcoming experience for residents and visitors alike. As with any event of this scale, we are preparing for a range of potential public safety considerations, including unauthorized unmanned aircraft systems, cyber disruptions, routine criminal activity, and increased demand on emergency and healthcare services. Central to our approach is timely, actionable information-sharing with local, state, federal, and international partners to ensure coordinated and effective operations.

Since 2003, federal homeland security grants—particularly the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program—have allowed our region to build a mature, multi-disciplinary preparedness framework. These investments helped establish and continue to sustain the Kansas City Regional Fusion Center, our primary intelligence hub.

Through this federal support, we have built interoperable radio communications and strengthened intelligence sharing. We have enhanced specialized response capabilities—including hazmat, explosive ordnance disposal, and tactical WMD teams—that train together and can deploy regionwide. We conduct thousands of training hours each year through tabletop, functional, and full-scale exercises. All of this allows for real-time situational awareness and response across jurisdictions.

These capabilities are the direct result of sustained federal-local partnerships, which are critical to our success. They are the foundations on which we are building our World Cup security posture.

The challenges facing Kansas City are driven primarily by the scale and complexity of the tournament's footprint within our region. This is not a single-venue or single-day event—it involves coordination of operations across multiple sites, jurisdictions, and weeks, requiring sustained planning and collaboration at every level.

At the same time, we must operate with finite resources. Law enforcement personnel, specialized teams, and critical equipment are limited not only locally, but nationally. Host cities will draw from the same pool of federal resources and specialized capabilities. Additionally, federal funding timelines create uncertainty in operational planning, staffing and logistics.

We have strengthened communications across agencies, but at the scale of a global event, this remains a challenge. The World Cup requires coordination not only locally, but nationally and internationally. Beyond connected systems, the greater challenge is identifying and communicating actionable intelligence to support real-time decision making.

We are grateful for this committee's work and support towards World Cup safety and security. The counter-UAS authorities under the 2026 National Defense Authorization Act provide critical resources to detect, track and mitigate UAS threats. The FIFA World Cup Security Grant Program is necessary to fund the personnel, equipment and operational needs required to deliver a safe event. We appreciate continued support and partnership as we approach this historic World Cup tournament.

Kansas City's investments—backed by federal homeland security grants, and state and local commitments—enhance not only our regional readiness, but our nation's preparedness for high-profile international events. These capabilities represent thousands of hours of planning, training, and coordination among public safety partners.

Before the first whistle blows later this year, we want to ensure that information flows faster than threats, that partnerships are stronger than vulnerabilities, and that everyone experiences a safe and secure World Cup.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. I look forward to your questions.