

**Testimony of
Matthew R. Verderosa, Chief of Police,
United States Capitol Police
Before the United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Legislative Branch**

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Chairman Yoder, Ranking Member Ryan, and Members of the Committee, I am honored to be here today, and I appreciate the opportunity to present the United States Capitol Police budget request for Fiscal Year 2019. I am joined here by some members of my Executive Team and Executive Management Team, including Chief of Operations, Assistant Chief Steven Sund; Chief Administrative Officer Richard Braddock; General Counsel Gretchen DeMar; Chief Financial Officer Dominic Storelli; and Acting Inspector General Michael Bolton. Also joining me today is USCP Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Chairman Gus Papathanasiou, as well as USCP International Brotherhood of Teamsters Chair Karen Gray-Thomas.

First, I would like to thank the Committee for its unwavering support of the United States Capitol Police. On behalf of the entire Department, I would like to express our appreciation to the Members of this Committee, and to the entire Congress for providing the necessary funding to support our personnel and operations.

Since I last appeared before the Committee, the Department has effectively managed an ever-increasing number of demonstrations, has swiftly responded to critical incidents and civil disobedience, and has investigated numerous, credible threats made against Members of Congress or the U.S. Capitol. Most notably, our mission to protect and serve Congress was thrust into the national spotlight on June 14, 2017, after a gunman fired shots during the Republican Congressional baseball team's practice, and our own highly-trained Special Agents responded swiftly and heroically; preventing a serious tragedy.

The Department also received its sixth consecutive accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). We were awarded CALEA's Gold Standard with Excellence – the highest rating a law enforcement agency can receive during the evaluation process, which is reserved for Departments that exhibit strong organizational health. The U.S. Capitol Police was further recognized for having been accredited for 15 or more continuous years with the enhanced Certificate of Meritorious Accreditation. Receiving this distinction demonstrates how much the Department has grown and matured since receiving our first accreditation in November 2002. All of these distinctions are a real testament to the professionalism of our workforce, and it demonstrates that we are constantly implementing the best law enforcement practices.

I am extremely proud of the Department and our responses to the extraordinary events of the past year. No one could have predicted all that we have encountered, but our officers are trained to face each crisis and challenge, and we must always be prepared to face the unimaginable. We know that what at first may appear to be routine or even mundane may in fact be a threat to the safety and wellbeing of the Capitol Complex. We are always aware that any threat can change very quickly as circumstances unfold.

Mr. Chairman, the support of the Committee and the Capitol Police Board has contributed to our success in achieving our mission, as well as our ability to recognize and address the dynamic nature of current threats. You and your staff have taken great time and made significant efforts to work closely with the Department's leadership team, and we are truly grateful for your keen understanding of the complexity of our mission and the challenges we face.

We have developed our Fiscal Year 2019 budget with a focus on continuing to equip and prepare our workforce to be agile and responsive to the operations of Congress, and keeping the U.S. Capitol Complex safe and secure. Our overall Fiscal Year 2019 request is \$456.4 million, and represents an increase of seven percent over Fiscal Year 2018 enacted levels.

As with all law enforcement agencies, personnel salaries and overtime make up the majority of our annual budget. Conversely, we could not do what we do without our dedicated law enforcement officers and professional civilian staff. We have continuously worked throughout the Department to effectively and prudently allocate our existing resources to achieve the best possible staffing balance to meet mission requirements. We regularly analyze our workforce distribution to align job functions, assignments, workload, risk management, and organizational readiness, along with the threat assessments and mandatory mission requirements, within a dynamic environment.

Even utilizing these various strategies, the types of threats we are seeing and responding to are changing every day. Today, there are no routine activities for law enforcement officers. The reality is that the Capitol Complex remains an attractive target to foreign and domestic terrorists, homegrown violent extremists, other lone offenders, and political extremists. These threats could take the form of an active shooter, vehicle ramming, improvised explosive devices, drones, chemical or biological substance releases, or any combination of these tactics.

As we experienced on that baseball field in Alexandria, Virginia, last June, occurrences of homegrown, violent extremist “lone wolf” episodes are on the rise. Lone offenders, in particular, are nearly impossible to detect due to their ability to keep their plans hidden and the prevalence of encrypted communications. Across the world, we continue to see more and more terrorist organizations attacking public venues. In just the past year, we have seen an escalation in the number of mass casualty events in our own country.

As a result, our officers must look at every event on the Capitol Grounds – mass demonstrations, concerts, traffic stops, and even the simple act of Members crossing the street for a vote, as a potential target for a threat. Our officers continually assess each activity they see for any risks to the safety and security of the Capitol Complex.

Based on this increase in terrorist and domestic mass casualty events and upon studying the tactics displayed by known assailants, the U.S. Capitol Police continuously reviews our operational and tactical postures to ensure that we are taking every measure possible to maintain

the security of the Capitol Complex, while allowing the legislative process to continue to function in an open environment, and protecting individuals' First Amendment rights. While we do not know of any imminent threat on the U.S. Capitol or the legislative process, we must be prepared to respond effectively to any threat that may present itself.

Therefore, working in concert with the Capitol Police Board, the Department is continuing to deploy additional screening of various means throughout the Capitol Complex. This involves deploying security measures to better secure and screen at building access points.

Over the past year, the Department has identified areas to modify or eliminate mission requirements to offset these additional security priorities. We also reviewed duties currently performed by sworn personnel and began to civilianize several positions so that officers could be reassigned to duty stations that utilized their specialized training and skills to further meet operational requirements.

Our Fiscal Year 2019 budget includes base funding for 1,943 sworn and 420 civilian positions, and requests half-year funding for an additional 72 sworn officers and 20 civilian positions. These additional sworn personnel will be utilized to enhance the Department's ability to detect, impede, and address threats that currently exist and continue to evolve. Additionally, we are also requesting one civilian position for the Office of Inspector General for the purposes of furthering their work on addressing potential cybersecurity threats.

To support these efforts, the Fiscal Year 2019 funding request reflects a 6.57 percent increase over the Fiscal Year 2018 enacted level for personnel costs. This increase is necessary to address the annual cost of living and benefit cost increases incurred by the Department, additional staffing requirements, and overtime costs to meet mission requirements.

As you are aware, the Department's current sworn staffing levels do not provide the complete and necessary resources to meet all of our mission requirements within the established sworn officer utility or the number of work-hours in a year that each officer is available to perform work. This utility number is used to determine overall staffing requirements. It balances

the utility of available staff with annual salary and overtime funding along with known mission requirements. These known requirements include post coverage, projected unscheduled events such as demonstrations, late-night sessions, and holiday concerts. The utility number also estimates unfunded requirements that occur after the budget is enacted, such as unforeseen critical emergency situations, and providing adequate police coverage of Congressional hearings.

Because of the need to fill the mission requirement gap through overtime, the Department has struggled to take our sworn personnel off of their posts to conduct training. In order to provide mandatory training, we must utilize overtime to ensure that the officers may be offline for training, while meeting our daily mission requirements. There are flexibilities that other law enforcement agencies have to offset or defer daily requirements to allow for officer training that our unique mission does not afford us.

Therefore, mission requirements in excess of available personnel must be addressed through the identification of efficiencies such as post realignment and/or reductions, technology, and cutbacks within the utility. Where necessary, we meet this requirement through the use of overtime. If the requested staffing levels for Fiscal Year 2019 are funded, the Department's overtime projection is approximately \$43.7 million. This amount will cover base mission requirements, our support of non-reimbursable events at the Library of Congress, and the ability for sworn employees to be backfilled while they attend mandatory and necessary training.

For the Department's General Expenses budget, our request includes items such as protective travel; hiring, outfitting, and training new sworn personnel; supplies and equipment; management systems and technology upgrades; and other non-personnel needs. In planning for increases in both the number of facilities we will be protecting and staffing requirements, we are requesting \$81.5 million for general expenses, which is an increase of \$6.7 million over the Fiscal Year 2018 enacted level. This funding will address increases in operating costs including investments in training, recruiting and outfitting new employees, replacing key equipment and systems that are outdated and becoming obsolete, and restoring annual levels reduced in previous fiscal years to meet vital Department needs.

As the Chief of Police, it is my fiduciary responsibility to look at every opportunity within the Department to accomplish our mission before asking for additional resources. The Committee and the Congress have been very supportive of the Department, and I would not ask for additional resources unless we have identified a great need. We put in much time and planning while formulating our budget request each year.

For the past eight years, we have implemented uniform procedures to effectively measure and justify USCP planning, program, and resource requirements through a comprehensive, standardized, and repeatable management process that we call the “Force Development Business Process.” It provides a transparent decision-making process that includes reviews and approvals by an Investment Review Board made up of key agency management, and it provides a structure that is results-driven and based on meeting operational needs. In addition, to ensure the accuracy of our budget request, our Fiscal Year 2019 budget went through multiple layers of review and validation, and is tied to supporting documentation for each budget element.

Further, I am pleased to report that the Department received its sixth consecutive unmodified “clean” opinion on our financial statements from the USCP Office of Inspector General (OIG). The Department truly values the OIG’s assistance in our efforts to further improve operations and performance; and the long-term resolution of recommendations related to internal controls, business processes and material weaknesses remains of the highest importance to me and our management team.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Fay Ropella who served as the USCP Inspector General for five years, and was instrumental in guiding the Department’s efforts to become more effective and efficient. She retired from federal service at the end of March, and we all wish her the best in retirement. As we continue to work to further the mission of the Department, we look forward to working with Mr. Bolton in his role as the Acting Inspector General.

Mr. Chairman, the United States Capitol Police is the only police department in the nation that does what we do and with the high visibility in which we do it. Mission focus will

always be the key to our ability to be successful, to serve and protect, and to ensure our employees go home safe every day. The Congress relies on us to do our jobs so that they may do the people's work in a free and open manner in the "People's House."

In closing, I want to assure the Committee that the U.S. Capitol Police is committed to always being at the ready to ensure that the Capitol Complex is safe and secure. Our Fiscal Year 2019 budget request was developed with great thought and discipline to ensure that the necessary mission requirements were at the forefront of our planning and prioritization.

We will continue to work closely with you and the Committee staff to ensure that we meet the needs and expectations of the Congress, as well as our mission, in a reasonable and responsible manner. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.