

Testimony of Garret O'Boyle

Before the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government

May 18, 2023

Chairman Jordan, members of the committee, thank you for addressing FBI malfeasance and allowing me to speak today. Aside from that point of gratitude, I am sad, I am disappointed, and I am angry that I have to be here to testify about the weaponization of the FBI and DOJ. Weaponization against not only its own employees, but against those institutions and individuals that are supposed to protect the American people. I am here today because even though I am wrongfully suspended from the FBI, I remain duty bound to the American people to play my small role in rectifying these issues. After all, I never swore an oath to the FBI. I swore my oath to the Constitution.

I've served my nation and community my entire adult life in the United States Army, as a police officer, and as an FBI special agent.

Shortly after high school I joined the United States Army, where I served in the infantry, and I was quickly promoted through the ranks. I deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. I served in the historic 101st Airborne Division, and I received the Combat Infantryman's Badge which is awarded to those infantrymen who engage in ground combat with our nation's enemies.

The Army's official motto is: "This we'll defend." Along with numerous others, I volunteered to serve this Nation, risking my life in combat to protect America and her values. I know some of the best men and women that this country has to offer; they come from all backgrounds, races, and creeds. They helped mold me into the person I am today. Each was willing to sacrifice, and many did, to protect this great Nation. It is our duty to honor their sacrifices by standing up for what is right regardless of the difficulty.

After serving in the Army, I became a police officer. Police officers, like me, are imperfect beings, but we strive to uphold the law and the Constitution. People who go to work every day trying to make their communities better, yet who nonetheless are faced with budget cuts and calls for defunding as we continue spiraling away from law and order as a nation.

While serving as a police officer, I finished my bachelor's degree graduating with honors in criminology and law studies. Shortly thereafter I began the long road to becoming an FBI special agent. A position I once understood to be the pinnacle of law enforcement, and a way to continue to serve this Nation and protect and defend the Constitution.

During my four years as a special agent, I received the highest annual review an employee can receive. I volunteered for, tried out for, and was selected for an FBI SWAT team; I also volunteered for, tried out for, and was selected for a new unit the FBI created

and I received an award for my work on an anti-abortion extremism case. I've been smeared as a malcontent and subpar FBI employee. This smear stands in stark contrast to my life in public service.

This smear campaign, disgusting as it is, is unsurprising. Despite our oath to uphold the Constitution, too many in the FBI aren't willing to sacrifice for the hard right over the easy wrong. They see what becomes of whistleblowers; how the FBI destroys their careers, suspends them under false pretenses, takes their security clearances and pay with no true options for real recourse or remedy. This is by design; it creates an Orwellian atmosphere that silences opposition and discussion. We know what is right to do, yet we too often refuse to do what is right because of the difficulty and suffering it incurs.

I couldn't knowingly continue on this path silently without speaking out against the weaponization I witnessed even if it meant losing my job, my career, my livelihood, my family's home, and now, even my anonymity. It's up to members of this committee, current and former FBI employees, and indeed all Americans, to ensure that the weaponization of our own government against the people comes to an end; no matter the personal cost.

As James Madison prudently opined: "In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and the next place, oblige it to control itself." The safeguards currently in place at the FBI are clearly inadequate and must be reworked to protect whistleblowers and others who are inappropriately targeted.

The FBI can extract whatever they want from me; I'm willing to bear that burden. I've sworn to defend this country from enemies both foreign and domestic, even if that means sacrificing my life. I've lived that oath out since enlisting in the Army, consistently saying, "here am I, send me." My oath, however, did not include sacrificing the hopes, dreams, and livelihood of my family: my strong, beautiful and courageous wife and my four sweet and beautiful daughters, who have endured this process along with me.

In weaponized fashion, the FBI allowed me to accept orders to a new position half-way across the country. They allowed us to sell my family's home. They ordered me to report to the new unit when our youngest daughter was only *two weeks old*. Then, on my first day on the new assignment, they suspended me; rendering my family homeless and refused to release our household goods, including our clothes, for weeks.

All I wanted to do was serve my country by stopping bad guys and protecting the innocent. To my chagrin, bad guys have begun running parts of the government making it difficult to continue to serve this Nation and protect the innocent. But I for one, will never stop trying. And I'll never forget my oath.