

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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MEMORANDUM

May 21, 2021

To: Members of the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Fr: Committee Staff

Re: Hearing on “Confronting Violent White Supremacy (Part V): Examining the Rise of Militia Extremism”

On Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. on the Zoom video platform, the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties will hold a remote hearing examining the role of the militia movement in the current rise of right-wing extremism.

I. HEARING PURPOSE

In March 2021, less than two months after militia groups helped to execute the attack on the U.S. Capitol, the Director of National Intelligence issued a report on domestic violent extremism (DVE) that placed militia violent extremists on par with racially motivated violent extremists as “the most lethal DVE threats.”¹

Far-right militias have been at the center of domestic extremist activity during the past year and have mobilized their members to respond to a broad range of issues.² There have also been several instances of law enforcement acquiescing or even welcoming paramilitary activity by militias, such as when police in Kenosha, Wisconsin, told militia members they “appreciated” their presence, shortly before one of them—Kyle Rittenhouse—killed two protesters.³

The hearing will examine the evolving nature of the threat posed by the militia movement, its relationship to white supremacists, its dangerous intersection with law

¹ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Domestic Violent Extremism Poses Heightened Threat in 2021* (Mar. 1, 2021) (www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/21_0301_odni_unclass-summary-of-dve-assessment-17_march-final_508.pdf).

² Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, *Standing By: Right-Wing Militias & the U.S. Election* (Oct. 2020) (online at <https://acleddata.com/blog/2020/10/21/standing-by-militias-election/>).

³ *Why Police Encouraged a Teenager with a Gun to Patrol Kenosha’s Streets*, Vox (Aug. 27, 2020) (online at www.vox.com/2020/8/27/21404117/kenosha-kyle-rittenhouse-police-gun-populism).

enforcement and military communities, and the tools that state and federal law enforcement possess to counter illegal paramilitary activity.

II. WITNESSES

The Honorable Gurbir Grewal

New Jersey Attorney General

Mary McCord

Legal Director, Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection
Georgetown University

Peter Simi

Associate Professor of Sociology
Chapman University

Michael Gonzalez

Senior Fellow
The Heritage Foundation

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