

**Statement of the Honorable Paul D. Irving
Sergeant at Arms
U.S. House of Representatives**

**Committee on House Administration
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Good morning Chairman Miller, Mr. Brady, and members of the committee. I deeply appreciate this opportunity to appear before you to discuss the Sergeant at Arms priorities for 2016 and beyond. Before beginning my testimony though, I would like to say what a truly unique honor and opportunity it is to serve this institution. I look forward to continuing to work closely with you and the other members of this committee throughout the 114th Congress.

As an overview, the Sergeant at Arms serves as the chief law enforcement officer and chief protocol officer for the House of Representatives. Some of my other duties include supervision of the House Floor and galleries, responsibility for the coordination of the House continuity program, the House Appointments Desk, the House garages and parking lots, as well as administration of all staff identification badges and security clearances. In addition, the Office of the Sergeant at Arms coordinates special events for the House of Representatives in conjunction with other House and Senate offices, the U.S. Capitol Police, and external entities.

As the chief law enforcement officer of the House, I am responsible for directing all security matters which relate to the House of Representatives. Together with the Senate Sergeant

at Arms, Frank Larkin, and the Architect of the Capitol, Stephen Ayers, I serve as a member of the U.S. Capitol Police Board which oversees and establishes policies and guidelines which safeguard the Capitol complex and all its occupants.

I also work very closely with the other Officers of the House – Karen Haas, the Clerk and Ed Cassidy, the Chief Administrative Officer. Whether dealing with routine chamber operations or emergency and continuity planning, it truly is a team effort among the staff in each of our offices.

In the security arena, I devote considerable time to the following on-going priorities to ensure the safety of Members, their staff, and visitors to the House of Representatives:

- Threat Analysis – Review and assess threats and direction-of-interest reports coming to attention of the Sergeant at Arms Office; as well as develop, in concert with U.S. Capitol Police, strategies to protect Members who receive threats or concerning-interest from subjects; as well as advise Members on immediate threats and the status of threats and mitigation efforts;
- Intelligence Monitoring and Analysis– Monitor intelligence information as it relates to the security of the House of Representatives and the Congress; and analyze intelligence information to formulate strategies to ensure the most robust protection, mitigation strategies, emergency response protocols, and contingency planning;

- Demonstrations – Monitor demonstrations that threaten to disrupt the orderly conduct of Congressional business; monitor response by the U.S. Capitol Police; as well as provide advice to affected Member offices and U.S. Capitol Police;
- Congressional Delegations (CODELs) – Monitor all foreign CODEL travel by members; facilitate State Department and military coverage, especially for leadership; maintain liaison with the military and State Department to ensure adequate coverage; facilitate Member briefings as necessary for notable or high profile CODELs. Monitor (to the degree possible) non-CODEL travel by Members;
- Head of State and VIP Visits – Ensure an increased and effective security posture is implemented and maintained as appropriate, as well as review all security plans for visiting dignitaries/heads of state/VIPs to the House of Representatives;
- Notable Special Events –Ensure the coordination of our Federal and State law enforcement entities with the U.S. Capitol Police for the effective implementation of security at large scale events on Capitol grounds (such as the State of the Union);
- Member of Congress Sponsored Events – Provide appropriate law enforcement related support and guidance to Member offices regarding the security of Member events on and off-campus; and,
- Committee Hearings – Monitor sensitive and/or potentially provocative Committee hearings to ensure that U.S. Capitol Police and Committee personnel understand options for security, and guidelines for restoring order if needed. We also ensure adequate security is in place prior to committee hearings.

Transition to a New Congress

All divisions of the Sergeant at Arms have been coordinating in a team effort for a smooth transition to the 114th Congress, including distribution of all Member pins, Spouse pins, and license plates. For instance, we have issued nearly 20,000 new 114th Congress identification badges to the entire House community, including permanent and temporary House staff, vendors and contractor badges, Architect of the Capitol staff and contractor badges, as well as all liaison badges.

We have issued nearly 7,000 parking permits for the 114th Congress throughout the Capitol complex, and have coordinated with the Committee on House Administration and the Architect of the Capitol regarding parking impacts from the Cannon Renewal Project.

In regard to security clearances, our office has 125 congressional staff who are currently awaiting their clearances and 126 staff pending periodic re-investigations.

Airspace Security

Airspace security is a top priority. I want to assure the committee that even before the recent incident on the West Front, the Capitol Police Board and the Capitol Police have been doing everything possible and are working very closely with our partners in Federal law enforcement, the Departments of Defense, Transportation, and Homeland Security, as well as the Federal Aviation Administration, to enhance airspace security around the Capitol within the challenging confines of the urban environment of the National Capitol Region. In particular:

- We are working with our partners to ensure the most efficient and robust early detection, identification, and warning systems are in place for the U.S. Capitol complex;
- We are taking steps to ensure there is consistent and constant interagency communication and that early warnings are communicated in real-time;
- We have improved our internal communications/alerts to Members and staff during each and every security incident;
- We are enhancing the countermeasures and neutralization technologies available to us, as well as the policies consistent with those countermeasures.

Garage Security Enhancement Project

The garage security enhancement project is designed to address existing vulnerabilities and will provide a greatly enhanced level of security in the House Office Buildings. This project, which is to occur in multiple phases, will move the entire Capitol complex far closer to 100% screening. The first phase is the installation of infrastructure and hardware to allow the garage entrances to be locked down in the event of an emergency.

In the second phase, the Office of the Sergeant at Arms is working in conjunction with the Architect of the Capitol and the U.S. Capitol Police to conduct a design and feasibility study for this continuing initiative. This phase is intended to ensure that all those entering the House Office Buildings will undergo a consistent level of screening to ensure the safety and security of

all those who work and visit our House office buildings. I would like to thank the Committee for its continued and support of the project.

Capitol Complex Screening

We are currently exploring the possibility of installing enhanced screening portals within House Sergeant at Arms-space in the Capitol Visitor Center to provide an additional layer of security to the galleries of the House of Representatives. The concept is for visitors to the House Galleries to be screened for powders, liquids and other non-metallic objects prior to entering the House galleries. Currently, these items are not detectable by more traditional screening methods and could be used to disrupt a session of Congress. These enhanced screening portals have been shown to be effective in detecting these non-traditional threats.

Capitol Appointments Desks

We are in the final stages of enhancing our Appointments Desk operations, through installation of additional locations in the Capitol Visitor Center. The purpose behind these desks will be to confirm that visitors seeking entrance into the Capitol have business in the Capitol. These desks will help to ensure that those individuals with official business in the Capitol are not proceeding unescorted and unaccounted for within the building.

Mail Hood Initiative

Previously, Members' offices have been targeted through use of the mail system with Anthrax and Ricin. Although all mail coming into Member offices in Washington, D.C., has been

screened for potential hazards, not all mail coming into district offices is screened, and therefore presents a potentially greater vulnerability. Knowing how to safely screen and open mail is crucial. The mail hood initiative closes an existing gap in House secure mail procedures and protocols. Properly using this device can reduce the risk of serious injury and, in extreme circumstances, death. The mail hood is designed to protect the operator from exposure to dangerous material that may be mailed to a District office. This is accomplished by containing the materials within the device and filtering particles through a HEPA filtration system.

My office has been working in conjunction with the CAO and we are in the process of purchasing mail hoods to deploy to Member district offices where mail does not undergo prior security screening. We will provide each office with an initial hood and Member offices can request additional hoods as needed which will be delivered after the initial shipment of one mail hood per office. It is anticipated that the deliveries will begin within the next month and continue through the remainder of the year.

District Office Security and the Law Enforcement Coordinator (LEC) Program

Very few priorities are more important than the safety and security of the lawmakers and staff in their district offices. As the Sergeant at Arms, my preeminent focus – as a crucial extension of this office’s law enforcement and protocol responsibilities – is continuously helping to ensure the safety of our 435 Members, six delegates, and the staff who support your ability to govern and create public policy.

To this end, in partnership with U.S. Capitol Police, we continue to build a strong, effective outreach program with Member offices regarding District Office security. We offer guidance on best practices, providing information on how to obtain a thorough security review, and how to coordinate security surveys when requested. We will continue to provide this essential service to offices, while remaining mindful of the need to provide cost effective recommendations as well as solutions.

The Law Enforcement Coordinator Program (LEC) remains a significant focus for the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and is something that should be an integral part of every District Office Security plan. The LEC program assists Member offices plan and prepare for security threats in the district. The Law Enforcement Coordinator is the Member's district office liaison with law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Capitol Police. District offices are encouraged to assign a primary and an alternate LEC. LECs provide an essential link to the local law enforcement community, enabling effective liaison and personal rapport with local and state law enforcement.

In part, the LEC is responsible for: establishing and maintaining contact with any building security; monitoring the Member's schedule, particularly events occurring in the District; notifying local law enforcement of public events that the Member will be attending in the District; requesting local law enforcement support at the public events, regardless of size; notifying the Sergeant at Arms office if assistance is needed in coordinating with local law enforcement, sheriff or state police, in those cases where assistance is unavailable; providing copies of press announcements to local law enforcement; reporting all threatening or suspicious

communications to the local law enforcement and to the U.S. Capitol Police Threat Assessment Section; coordinating District office and/or residential security assessments and implementation of appropriate security measures; ensuring each district office has a security plan; maintaining contact information for the Member's spouse and ensure that the spouse knows who to contact if assistance is needed; and, notifying local law enforcement, if the Member has school-aged children, the name and address of the school.

The LEC program has demonstrated its benefit to the institution in a cost-effective manner and we will continue to focus our efforts on this critical initiative during the 114th Congress and beyond.

Emergency Management Program

In partnership with the Chief Administrative Officer, the Clerk of the House, the U.S. Capitol Police, the Architect of the Capitol, the Attending Physician, and peer organizations in the Senate, the Sergeant at Arms implements a comprehensive Emergency Management Program for the House of Representatives, ensuring the Continuity of Operations of the House and the safety of House Members, staff, employees, and visitors during emergencies. As part of a comprehensive emergency preparedness strategy, we are committed to enhancing the emergency management program for every Member, Committee, and support office. For example, we place continued emphasis on the implementation of the Office Emergency Coordinator (OEC) program, an initiative designed to facilitate emergency planning and information sharing for all House offices.

The Office Emergency Coordinator (OEC) program serves as the focal point to emergency planning and preparedness at the office-level. Each House office is asked by our office to designate staff to serve as either primary or alternate OECs. This duty is in addition to their regular office work. This individual is then responsible for office-level emergency planning and preparedness. There are more than 1,100 OECs representing all Member offices, committees and Officers.

The OEC program is designed to facilitate information sharing with House offices and to advise offices on how to prepare for emergency actions. We work with OECs to ensure that they have the information and the resources they need to perform emergency planning activities. We conduct periodic OEC training and schedule drills and exercises to practice these plans and improve – and to enhance – our ability to respond in any emergency.

Our office continues to oversee emergency planning, training, and exercises including notifications, evacuations, and shelter-in-place activities to ensure readiness to respond to any emergency affecting the U.S. House of Representatives. In conjunction with the U.S. Capitol Police, we recently began active shooter training for OECs and other interested staff. This training places an emphasis on what actions staff should take if confronted with such an emergency.

Upgrading Cameras throughout the Capitol Campus

We are currently working with House and Senate Leadership, the U.S. Capitol Police, the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Architect of the Capitol to enhance cameras throughout the Capitol campus. These cameras, located around Capitol Square, will enhance the capabilities of the U.S. Capitol Police to monitor and secure the Capitol. These cameras are being designed to provide the most coverage as well as meet the architectural requirements of the Olmsted plan.

Sergeant at Arms Server and Database Infrastructure Upgrade/Replacement

The upgrade of our computer server infrastructure will provide modernization and complete replacement of file servers currently in use within the Sergeant at Arms organization. Our current physical servers are extremely old and in need of replacement. In fact, recently our ID operations were affected when the current server infrastructure malfunctioned. While the server was repaired and most of the data recovered, we want to ensure that our service level to the House community is always at the maximum.

In addition to our server upgrade, our parking security staff is currently examining a new data management program to streamline the parking database. We are in the process of analyzing other similar agencies such as the Senate, the Smithsonian and the Pentagon, and are visiting those sites to view the systems in place and determine which systems would meet House requirements.

Collaboration in the House-wide Strategic Plan

My office is excited to be working with the Committee and the Office of the Inspector General on the House Strategic Plan, as well as updating the Sergeant at Arms Strategic Plan. We are also working with the Clerk of the House and Chief Administrative Officer to ensure the strategic initiatives of the House adequately address the expectations of the Committee.

The O’Neill Building

The renovation of the Cannon Building has required staff to be relocated to the O’Neill Federal Office Building. The O’Neill Building is operated by the General Services Administration (GSA), and not by the House. Therefore, in conjunction with the CAO and the Clerk, my office has staff located in the O’Neill building to act as liaisons between the House community, GSA and the Federal Protective Service to make sure the concerns of the House staff are addressed in real time.

Protocol and Chamber Operations

Employees of the Protocol and Chamber Operations are responsible for House of Representatives Chamber operations, House Gallery access, official business visitor access to the U.S. Capitol and Office Buildings, and protocol and special event coordination. This includes:

- Coordination of logistics with Leadership offices and Committees for all Head of State and high level dignitary visits to the Capitol and House office buildings;
- Planning and coordination of all special events held in the Capitol, the House Chamber,

and in the House Office Buildings, including protocol assistance;

- Responsibility for access control and overseeing of decorum in the Chamber of the Hall of the House of Representatives. Chamber Security personnel manage Floor access when the House of Representatives is in session by regulating entry at all access points. Chamber Security personnel maintain decorum on the Floor and the Speaker's Lobby, as well as provide a message relay service for Members;
- Administration of all ticketed events to the House of Representatives and coordination of the distribution of all gallery passes to Member offices;
- Facilitation of access to the House Gallery for constituents, visitors, and guests of Members of Congress. Chamber Support personnel operate two prohibited items check areas where items are securely stored while guests visit the House Gallery. Chamber Support Services personnel manage the logistics and flow of visitors from the Capitol Visitors Center to and from the House Gallery.

Some of the areas of focus thus far this year have been: The Opening Session of the 114th Congress, the annual State of the Union Address by the President, several Gold Medal Ceremonies and Congressional Events, eight visits by heads of state so far since January 2015 year, four Joint Sessions of Congress in the House Chamber, the recent Memorial Day Concert, and support has also been provided to several off-site Member events.

There are a number of large events this year and next for which planning is currently underway, such as the invitation extended by the Speaker to the Pope to address a Joint Meeting

of Congress on September 24. This will be the first such address delivered by a pontiff before Congress.

In my role as a Member of the U.S. Capitol Police Board, I spend considerable time attending to duties associated with the oversight of the U.S. Capitol Police. As background, the U.S. Capitol Police Board is an independent, statutorily created, bicameral and non-partisan board of directors charged with directing and overseeing the U.S. Capitol Police – on behalf of the Congress. This includes the policing, protection, security, intelligence assessment, counterterrorism, and emergency response and preparedness functions of the U.S. Capitol Police, including life safety, the assessment and recovery relating to the continuity of Congress and the protection of individuals and the Capitol complex.

The Board develops recommendations and policies, promulgates regulations, and oversees, monitors, evaluates, and directs security protocols for the protection of the Capitol complex. In conjunction with the U.S. Capitol Police, the Capitol Police Board accomplishes this mission by: Providing strategic advice and direction to the U.S. Capitol Police management, overseeing management of risk by the U.S. Capitol Police and holding the U.S. Capitol Police management accountable for organizational results; overseeing the U.S. Capitol Police expenditure of appropriated funds, including approval of the U.S. Capitol Police budget and major procurement issues; providing oversight and decision making with regard to the installation and maintenance of physical security, including technologically advanced security systems for the Capitol complex; recommending and approving the protection of Congressional

leadership and Members of Congress by the U.S. Capitol Police as necessary, based on professional threat assessment – including intelligence input; overseeing compliance with regulations for the control of activities on the Capitol grounds, including the traffic regulations, demonstration activities and the maintenance of a content-neutral First Amendment demonstration permitting system; developing, promulgating, and maintaining administrative regulations and policies for the U.S. Capitol Police; overseeing a comprehensive and effective legal and ethical compliance system for the U.S. Capitol Police; overseeing the threat and intelligence monitoring component of the U.S. Capitol Police and enhancement of intelligence information sharing within the U.S. Capitol Police structure, to include the Board, as well as information sharing between the Board/U.S. Capitol Police and the intelligence community; oversight of the Congressional security paradigm - committed to a balance between open access and sound security mechanisms; and, oversight of the emergency communication and coordination among Congressional emergency preparedness and response assets and entities of the U.S. Capitol Police.

I want to assure the Committee that I work very closely with the other members of the U.S. Capitol Police Board, the Chief of Police and staff of the department on these vital Capitol Police Board functions to ensure the safety and security of all those Members, staff and visitors to the U.S. House of Representatives. I speak with the Chief on a daily basis on these oversight matters, in addition to the myriad of security and intelligence related issues that occur daily. Furthermore, I have regular discussions with the other members of the Chief's Executive Team

(the Assistant Chief, Deputy Chiefs, and the Chief Administrative Officer) on matters pertaining to the overall management of the Department.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss some of the Sergeant at Arms priorities for the current fiscal year, FY 16 and beyond. As always, I want to assure you of my deep commitment – and that of everyone in my office – of providing the finest possible service to the House of Representatives while maintaining a safe and secure environment for all.

I will continue to keep the Committee informed of my activities and will be happy to answer any questions you may have.