

Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives

Hearing Title: Combatting Gang Violence on Long Island: Shutting Down the MS-13 Pipeline

Testimony Submitted by Mr. Robert Mickens

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My broad experience with MS 13 before Nisa's murder was like most people. I know we heard about them seldomly only in passing a little article from time to time or someone talking about them here and there. The old adage you never really know about anything until it affects you personally is very true. Unfortunately, it became all too real on September 13, 2016. MS 13's grip on the community has not been felt until it hit our family and made the news. Their shockingly cruel crime has brought forward a knowledge no community should deal with. Begs to ask Why didn't we know about them until now? Many MS 13 members come here as youngsters those who are initiate into the gang are a mix between citizens and unaccompanied minors who are then recruited or forced into MS 13. In turn we have these young kids committing crimes backed by fear promoted and abused by the gang.

The community has not only dealt with death but others acts of violence destruction of properties and it seeps into the school system nourished cultivated and brought forth. There's no one solution this process takes time and takes a community effort something easily said than done it also takes people working with law enforcement again something a lot find hard. We also have to change the mentality of the community CHANGE is the magic word it starts from the home and it ends in the streets schools need to be a safe haven for our children. The federal government, NYS, Suffolk county must update their laws to catch up to these individuals of MS13. With the same energy they put forth to commit crimes we need to be equally if not more aggressive to eradicate them from our society.