



116th Congress

First 100 Days Police Reform Priorities

- 1. The House Judiciary and Oversight Committees should conduct rigorous hearings and other oversight of Department of Justice (DOJ) policies and programs regarding local police departments.** The Trump and Sessions “[law and order](#)” agenda has eliminated or perverted Obama-era efforts to advance constitutional policing on a range of issues, including data collection, grant programs, militarization, anti-bias training, police misconduct, and community policing.

Specific questions to consider at an oversight hearing include: (1) What is the status of DOJ guidelines on the Death in Custody Reporting Act (DCRA)? The Death in Custody Reporting Act was [signed into law](#) in December 2014 but has yet to be enforced because [DOJ has failed to issues guidelines](#) on the law’s implementation. (2) How is DOJ responding to systemic policing failures and what is the current scope of work for DOJ’s Civil Rights Division (CRT) and Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office? Upon his appointment as Attorney General, Jeff Sessions announced plans to [abandon DOJ policies](#) and programs responding to systemic policing failures, including pattern or practice investigations, consent decrees, and collaborative reform. (3) How is DOJ using current programs and policies to advance a “[law and order](#)” agenda? DOJ is using grants and programs for this purpose, including the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) and [Project Safe Neighborhoods](#), which the Congress reauthorized in the 115th.

- 2. The House Judiciary and Oversight Committees should convene an oversight hearing on the federal programs that provide military weapons to law enforcement,** which include the Department of Defense 1033 program and DOJ and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grants. Through an [executive order](#) issued in August 2017, the oversight and regulation of these programs was [eliminated](#), even in the wake of a Government Accountability Office ([GAO July 2017 report](#)) that found the DOD 1033 program issued \$1.2 million worth of military gear to a [fictitious](#) law enforcement agency.
- 3. The House Judiciary Committee should continue to lead the bipartisan Policing Strategies Working Group,** which should advance and reform federal policy on policing. In the 115th Congress, the Working Group held a series of private roundtables to discuss police use of excessive force and officer safety. In the 116th, the Working Group should continue this examination, but in more public forums and with meaningful constituent representation. The working group meetings should serve as the foundation for official Committee hearings, federal policy reforms, and other congressional action, including Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports and agency briefings. In the first 100 days, the working group should examine police accountability mechanisms, including [liability insurance](#), “[cooling off](#)” periods, and a [police misconduct database](#).
- 4. The Congress should reintroduce legislation that advances meaningful police reform.** Bills that should be reintroduced in the first 100 days of the 116th Congress include the (1) [Jobs and Justice Act](#); (2) [End Racial and Religious Profiling Act](#); (3) [Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act](#); and (4) [Preventing Tragedies Between Law Enforcement and Communities Act](#).