

Written Statement of Proposed Testimony.
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The prospect of defunding and/or dismantling of Police forces across the country is one of the most unwise, irresponsible proposals by American politicians in our Nations history.

It is nothing short of the politicizing of current social events, a reactionary measure that can result in short and long term damage to American society.

Although I recognize the fact that the elimination of excessive force and physical retaliation by officers of the law against American Citizens is paramount today, and that racial profiling and harsh treatment of minorities is a very real reality that must be eliminated as well;

I do not recommend "throwing the baby out with the bathwater", by labeling ALL Police Officers as "Bad Cops" because of the bad actions of a rogue segment of those who's job is to "protect and serve"

In certain inner city communities across America, increased funding for Police, and increased Police presence is actually necessary, in order to enforce the law, and guarantee the safety and security of law bidding members of those communities.

The criminal element in and of society would enjoy nothing better than a reduction in Police presence and power.

The law abiding members of society would be directly threatened by an absence of Police, or the inability of Police to respond to criminal activities, and in many cases would endeavor to take the law into their own hands to ensure their safety and well being, as evidenced by the response of some who decided to defend themselves and their property from vandalism.

An absence of Police presence could potentially give rise to acts of domestic terrorism, mob rule, neighborhood intimidation and oppression, and vigilante-ism.

The weak, the timid, the elderly, retail establishments, single mothers, and youth would be especially vulnerable to criminal activity, as evidenced by the looting and vandalism of the past few weeks.

Defunding of Police Departments has already happened in a number of America Cities, and, rather than remedying problems, has actually made conditions much worse.

The City of Cleveland, my hometown, is a prime example of the results of Police defunding.

In 2004, the City of Cleveland laid off 285 Officers.
The entire Police budget was slashed by 31% (almost a third).

To cover basic services, the following units were either disbanded, or cut forever:

1. District Strike Force Units (never returned)
2. Narcotics Unit (completely cut)
3. SWAT (manpower cut, unit downsized)
4. Fugitive Unit (no ones tracking fugitives)
5. Auto Theft Unit (Disbanded)
6. Intelligence Unit (cut to bare bones)
7. Mounted Unit (cut 85%. Relies totally on donations)
8. Aviation Unit (down completely 3 yrs. Active only during special events)
9. Harbor Unit (disable. Boat rotting in dry dock)
10. Scientific Investigation Unit (cut 80%, all Lab Techs let go, all evidence collection is done by priority)
11. DARE (totally cut)
12. Community Policing (cut 45%)

Cleveland went through a decade long downsizing which saw department reduced from 1900 officers to 1500 on average.

Zone car coverage, which directly affects citizens, has been cut.

Police presence in any given district on any given shift has been cut in half, from 40 to 20.

One and two man units have both been reduced from 9 to 5.

Response time is dramatically longer.

Murder rates have climbed.

Property crimes are at record levels.

Aggravated robberies are higher.

Drug sale, use, and abuse is higher.

Drug and Alcohol related Motor Vehicle accidents are the highest they have ever been.

Cleveland has went from a relatively safe city, per capita, to an unbelievably unsafe city. Calls for service has increased, even though the population has dropped significantly over the last 20 years. Once "safe" areas of the city are now unsafe.

Homicides are UP 55% in Cleveland from this time last year, and Cleveland now has a higher murder rate (per 100,000 residents) than Chicago.

Police departments are only as effective as politicians and their appointees allow them to be.

Politicians and appointees are directly responsible for the state of their Police departments.

Law abiding citizens overwhelmingly think that defunding and/or disbanding Police departments is a BAD IDEA!

In short, defunding of Police Departments has already happened, and it has proven to be an EPIC fail. We cannot allow this paradigm to continue, if we want the streets of the communities in America, to be safe.

Community Policing is a very viable option to address the needs of inner city communities. Having Police IN the communities to actually get to know the residents, is the best way to obtain the results that we all want.

When I was growing up, the residents and business owners knew the Police officers that were assigned to our neighborhoods, and their presence was a deterrent to criminal activity.

In short, defunding of Police Departments in America has already happened, and it has proven to be an EPIC fail! We cannot allow that paradigm to continue if we want the neighborhoods of America to be safe to live in, the streets of America to be safe for residents to walk on, and the communities of America conducive for businesses to thrive in.