



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

When Badges Become Targets: How Anti-Law Enforcement Rhetoric Fuels Violence Against Officers

December 3, 2025

I want to begin by offering my condolences in the wake of the tragic shooting of Specialist Sarah Beckstrom and Staff Sergeant Andrew Wolfe in the Nation's capital last week. Our thoughts, and the thoughts of all Americans, continue to be with the families as they mourn Sarah's loss and pray for Andrew's recovery. Gun violence is a scourge on our country, and violence against troops and law enforcement officers is reprehensible. All Americans must condemn this violence, and the perpetrator must be held accountable.

With that in mind, I appreciate Chairman Garbarino holding today's hearing. Not only is this his first full committee hearing as chairman, but it is also the Committee's first hearing in four-and-a-half months after the former chairman left Congress, Republicans shut down the government, and the Speaker sent the House home.

It's past time for the Committee to get back to business. It is my understanding that next week we will have Secretary Kristi Noem before us at our annual worldwide threats hearing, and that, too, is overdue.

Never in the history of the Committee has a Secretary of Homeland Security hidden from congressional oversight like she has, aided by a Republican majority that refuses to hold the Trump administration accountable. Secretary Noem has a lot to answer for, particularly about how she is using masked officers to terrorize communities — including American citizens, children, pregnant women, and seniors — putting law enforcement officers and the public at risk. We look forward to her appearance next week.

As for today's hearing, I am pleased that Republicans want to address violence against police officers, but quite frankly I just can't get over their hypocrisy. Republicans have spent the last five years defending the armed mob that attacked police officers at the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

They demanded pardons for the perpetrators and cheered when President Trump issued them. Republicans didn't care that pardoning people who threatened and attacked officers would encourage others to do the same, they did it anyway.

Many Republicans voted to put this plaque in the Capitol honoring the service and sacrifice of law enforcement on January 6th, but have been silent as their leadership still refuses to hang the plaque for fear of angering President Trump. Republicans care more about being in President Trump's good graces than they do about honoring the officers who put their lives on the line to protect the Capitol on January 6th.

Today, we are grateful to have one of those heroes, Officer Daniel Hodges, before us. His testimony to this Committee and his prior testimony before the Committee on the January 6th Attack, which I was honored to chair, is as insightful as it is powerful.

Officer Hodges responded to the Capitol on January 6th, where he and his fellow officers were beaten, tased, and crushed by an armed mob that wanted to block the peaceful transfer of presidential power. I ask the clerk to play a video showing just a few moments of Officer Hodges and his fellow officers under attack at the Capitol on January 6th. Be advised the video contains strong language.

Officer Hodges, no matter how many times you've seen it, I cannot imagine how difficult it is for you to watch that footage of yourself in the tunnel. There are no words to adequately describe that awful day, and no way fully express our appreciation for what you and your fellow officers did to protect all of us who were gathered in the Capitol.

I know the threats of violence against you and other officers did not end on January 6th, but continue to this day. I thank you for being here and commend your bravery in continuing to speak out.

Unfortunately, when it comes to condemning threats and violence from the far-right, the silence from my colleagues on the other side is deafening. Until Republicans are willing to acknowledge the problem on their side of the political spectrum and do something about it, their statements about protecting police officers are hypocritical.

And unless they are willing to call out how the Trump administration's illegal enforcement tactics are endangering law enforcement and the public right now, their statements about protecting police officers are meaningless. I urge Republicans to join us in condemning attacks against police, regardless of ideological motivation, and begin holding the Trump administration accountable for its actions.

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