



# COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

***Standing Strong on the Thin Blue Line: How Congress Can Support State and Local Law Enforcement***

**May 15, 2024**

I want to thank our panel of witnesses for being here today and for their service to our country. In honor of National Police Week, I also want to recognize the incredible contributions of law enforcement and honor those brave officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice to keep our communities safe. Our Nation is forever in their debt.

Today, the Committee is meeting to examine how Congress can support State and local law enforcement. This is an important question. National Police Week is of great importance, but congressional support for law enforcement is about more than attending a ceremony or wearing a blue ribbon on your lapel one week out of the year.

It's about supporting law enforcement not just with ceremonial words or symbolic gestures but showing up when it counts and voting for the resources our police officers need every day.

It's about saying no when a disgraced former President calls for defunding the FBI or certain Members threaten to cut off funding for DHS because they have political disagreements with the Biden administration.

It's about keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of those who would seek to harm our communities, our kids, our houses of worship, our supermarkets, our gathering places, and the police sworn to protect all of us. And it's about honoring the heroic law enforcement officers — Capitol Police, Metropolitan Police, and others — who protected and defended this very Capitol and everyone in it on January 6, 2021.

While extreme MAGA Republicans try to cut funding and undermine public trust in law enforcement, Democrats are committed to providing Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement with funding and support to keep our communities safe. Democrats have made historic investments in public safety, law enforcement, school security, gun violence prevention, and non-profit security for churches, synagogues, and schools. As a result, violent crime has dropped across nearly every category during the Biden administration. We are proud of doing right by law enforcement but recognize more remains to be done.

I hope to hear from our witnesses today about supporting community policing efforts across the country and how Congress can help fund those critical efforts. I also hope to hear from our witnesses about how we can encourage police forces to recruit more diverse candidates, including people of color and women, because police forces work best when they reflect the communities they serve.

Again, I thank the witnesses for joining us today and express my appreciation for all the men and women of law enforcement who serve communities across America with honor and integrity. Be assured that those words have been and will continue to be backed up by action.

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