



Department of Justice

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

BLUE CITY CHAOS AND TRAGEDY: HOW THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION IS
ADDRESSING THE HUMAN COST OF SOFT ON CRIME POLICIES

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AT A HEARING ENTITLED
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PRESENTED
September 30, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and Distinguished Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the federal law enforcement professionals who are reducing crime in Washington, D.C. We are fully committed to restoring public safety and order in our Nation’s capital, ensuring that it reflects the pride and values of the American people. We are pleased to report that in working with our federal partners, the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department, and Mayor Bowser, we have had a tremendous impact making D.C. a safer place for its 700,000 residents and countless visitors.

The Crime Crisis in Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., has faced an alarming rise in violent crime, undermining its role as the heart of our constitutional republic. In 2024, the District recorded a homicide rate of approximately 27.54 per 100,000 residents—higher than major cities like Bogota,¹ Mexico City,² and Paris.³ And into 2025, violent crime, including homicides, carjackings, and assaults, continued to plague the city, jeopardizing the safety of residents, federal workers, and visitors.

The local government’s failure to enforce accountability exacerbated this crisis. Policies such as lenient prosecutions of juveniles, laws that have fostered a sense of impunity for criminals and that have restricted police, intentional reduction of the police force, low sentences for firearms offenses and violent crime have emboldened criminals and undermined the morale of law enforcement.

¹ Fact Sheet from the White House on President Trump’s Additional Measures to Address the Crime Emergency in D.C. (Aug. 25, 2025) (on file with author).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

This lack of accountability contributed to the public safety emergency, leaving law enforcement to repeatedly apprehend the same individuals for the same crimes. Further, the city government's failure to control crime forced the diversion of critical resources, hampering the Federal government's ability to operate efficiently.

The consequences of these policies were devastating. In May, two embassy staffers were murdered, highlighting the international implications of D.C.'s crime crisis.⁴ In June, a Congressional intern was fatally shot just blocks from the White House, underscoring the threat to those who serve our government.⁵ Most recently, a Trump Administration staffer was brutally beaten by a violent mob, further illustrating the urgent need for intervention.⁶ These high-visibility examples are emblematic of the plight faced by those living in D.C.

Federal Intervention Under President Trump's Leadership

Recognizing the severity of the crisis, President Trump took decisive action to restore safety and order in Washington, D.C. On August 7, 2025, the President launched Operation Making D.C. Safe and Beautiful, to bring together federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to address the root causes of crime and restore the capital to its rightful status as a symbol of American pride.

The operation is guided by the principles outlined in President Trump's Executive Order 14339 entitled "Additional Measures To Address The Crime Emergency In The District of Columbia," which directs federal agencies to take specific actions to address crime and improve public safety in the District.⁷

Operation Making D.C. Safe and Beautiful: Results and Impact

The D.C. Safe and Beautiful Task Force, in partnership with the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, is working to ensure that those who commit crimes in the District of Columbia are arrested, detained, prosecuted, and convicted.

There have been 83 multi-agency teams deployed across all seven patrol districts in D.C., working alongside local and federal partners to target crime hot spots identified by Metropolitan Police Department intelligence reports. Our officers are strategically positioned to enhance law enforcement presence and visibility, ensuring that violent offenders are apprehended and brought to justice. These efforts are yielding results: robbery is down approximately 57%, carjacking has dropped approximately 75%, and overall violent crime has decreased by approximately 39%. These successes reflect the dedication of our unified command, operating with integrity and a

⁴ Press Release, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, *Federal Hate Crime and First-Degree Murder Charges Filed Against Alleged Killer of Israeli Embassy Staff Members*, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/federal-hate-crime-and-first-degree-murder-charges-filed-against-alleged-killer-israeli> (last visited Sept. 25, 2025).

⁵ Press Release, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, *U.S. Marshals, Tactical K9 Arrest Two Suspects in Congressional Intern's Murder*, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/us-marshals-tactical-k9-arrest-two-suspects-congressional-interns-murder> (last visited Sept. 25, 2025).

⁶ Matthew Stabley, *DOGE staffer attacked in DC, Trump says in threat to federalize city*, NBC WASHINGTON (Aug. 7, 2025, 8:58 AM), <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/president-trump-politics/trump-threatens-federal-takeover-dc-crime/3970968/>.

⁷ Proclamation No. 14339, 90 Fed. Reg. 42,121 (Aug. 25, 2025).

shared commitment to President Trump's vision for a safe and beautiful capital.

We are incredibly proud of the 22 different agencies who are supporting our operation. All of the dedicated men and women throughout these agencies have answered the call to make the District of Columbia and this country safer. Additionally, the success of this operation has been possible because of the critical leadership of the Metropolitan Police Department, who have embraced their federal partners to ensure that all law enforcement assets are utilized to the fullest on the streets of D.C.

Key accomplishments since the operation began include:

- 3,496 Arrests: An average of 65 arrests per day, including 13 for homicide, 284 for firearms violations, and 472 for narcotics-related crimes.
- Firearms Seized: 336 firearms removed from the streets, averaging 6 per day.
- Gang Members Apprehended: 25 known gang members, including high-risk individuals, taken into custody, including those affiliated with recently designated terrorist organizations like MS-13.
- Missing Children Recovered: Ten missing children located and returned to safety.
- Homeless Encampments Cleared: 50 encampments removed, contributing to a safer and more orderly city.

The ripple effect of this operation can be felt in communities beyond the District. Individuals arrested as part of the operation have had ties to other DEA investigations outside of the District. These other investigations include a case with a seizure of approximately 30 pounds of methamphetamine, and another with a seizure of approximately 9 pounds of fentanyl. This is enough fentanyl to potentially kill nearly half of the residents of D.C. These successes have been made possible by the all-of-government approach taken to address crime in the District.

Challenges and Solutions

Despite the progress made under the operation, significant challenges remain. The District's soft-on-crime policies, including cashless bail and lenient juvenile prosecution, continue to undermine public safety.⁸ These policies have created a cycle of catch-and-release, forcing law enforcement to repeatedly apprehend the same offenders.⁹

To address these challenges, the D.C. Safe and Beautiful Task Force has focused on:

- Strengthening Pre-Trial Detention Policies: Ensuring that dangerous offenders are held in custody to prevent reoffending.¹⁰

⁸ Press release, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM, *House Passes Oversight Committee Legislation to Make D.C. Safe Again*, <https://oversight.house.gov/release/house-passes-oversight-committee-legislation-to-make-d-c-safe-again/> (last visited Sept. 25, 2025).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Make the District of Columbia Safe and Beautiful Act, H.R. 5103, 119th Cong. § 3(d) (2025).

- Boosting Law Enforcement Capabilities: Assisting the Metropolitan Police Department in recruiting and retaining officers and providing federal support for forensic investigations.¹¹
- Enhancing Accountability: Working closely with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia to pursue federal charges and ensure that violent offenders face appropriate consequences.¹²

We look forward to working with you to ensure the success we have had is long-lasting.

A Vision for a Safe and Beautiful Capital

President Trump's vision for Washington, D.C., is clear: to make it the safest and most beautiful capital in the world. This includes not only reducing crime but also restoring the city's infrastructure, beautifying public spaces, and ensuring that residents, visitors, and federal workers can live and work without fear.¹³ The Department of Justice, along with invaluable contributions by the United States Park Police, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Internal Revenue Service, and others, remains committed to working with Congress, additional federal partners, and the local government to achieve lasting safety and order in our Nation's capital.

Thank you for your continued support of our efforts. We look forward to answering your questions.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.* at § 2(b).