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October 5, 2022

United State Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 205-6275

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY (record@judiciary-dem.senate.gov)

Dear Chair Durbin:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary in the hearing entitled "Protecting Our Democracy's Frontline Workers," on August 3, 2022.

I have attached hereto my responses to the Committee's Questions for the Record .

Very truly yours,

Jason C. Johnson
President

**Questions for the Record from Senator Charles E. Grassley for Jason C. Johnson, former
Deputy Commission of the Baltimore Police Department & President of the Law
Enforcement Legal Defense Fund
“Protecting Our Democracy’s Frontline Workers”
August 3, 2022**

1. Why do states and cities need the help of the Department of Justice to prevent violent crime? What are the deficiencies and causes of those deficiencies?

The Department of Justice can play an integral role supporting local and state law enforcement by enhancing cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of dangerous, violent, serious and repeat offenders. Federal assistance in investigations through intelligence sharing as well as providing greater resources (financial, manpower, and coordination) to better target and remove these offenders from our communities. DOJ’s practical support must be coupled with greater moral support for local and state law enforcement.

- A. What difficulties are faced by police officers at the state and local level that affects their ability to address violent crime, and how can the federal government best mitigate those difficulties?

Local and state law enforcement are hindered by often hostile or skeptical elected and appointed officials. This includes local and state leaders as well as elected prosecutors who demean police publicly and adopt policies (including budget cuts) that hamstring law enforcement’s ability to do its job. As stated above, the federal government can better resource departments, coordinate crime-fighting efforts, and demonstrate its moral backing of their work.

2. What role can the Department of Justice play in helping states and cities reduce violent crime?

DOJ can offer greater financial, personnel, prosecutorial, and moral support to these local and state agencies to improve their ability to tackle rising crime and violence.

3. What role has the “defund the police” movement played in regards to the increase in violent crime over the past two and a half years?

Anti-police policies and rhetoric have created a morale crisis in policing. This has manifested in “de-policing,” where officers follow implicit or explicit orders to reduce or stop proactive policing altogether. The result is fewer police stops, searches, and arrests which often could have stopped violence before it occurred if the offender were taken off the streets. The morale crisis has also created a police attrition crisis as demoralized officers are resigning and retiring en masse, just as departments struggle to recruit and onboard new officers. These vacancies further hinder the ability of these departments to address rising crime as much if not more than police budget cuts.

4. What role have progressive prosecutors played in regards to the increase in violent crime over the past two and a half years?

The rise of progressive prosecutors – who often view police with suspicion and hostility – has engendered mistrust between the police and prosecutors, undermining prosecutions due to the lack of good faith. These prosecutors' policies – often in conflict with state law – signal to law enforcement that their efforts to prevent crime and apprehend offenders and bring them to justice is a futile effort because the offenders will not face consequences. It also creates a culture of impunity that emboldens criminals who know that they will not be held accountable and go on to commit the same offense or more serious ones over time. As this revolving door continues, police begin to see their efforts as futile – further the morale crisis, de-policing, attrition, and mistrust in a vicious cycle.