

**Questions for the Record from Senator Charles E. Grassley for Public Safety
Officer Zachary Andersen, Cedar Fall Public Safety
“Law Enforcement Officer Safety: Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve”
July 26, 2022**

- 1. I know that the murder of Sergeant Smith must have had a significant effect on you and the other officers who were present. Many people are not aware of the burden that is borne by law enforcement officers who go through these types of situations. What kind of resources and support were you and others able to receive after that crisis, and was it enough?**
 - After the incident the Iowa Department of Public safety through the State Patrol and Department of Criminal Investigation really did a good job stepping in and providing a great debrief for all those involved and another one for their spouses. They made psychologists available that were law enforcement friendly. I took advantage of those services and found it to be very beneficial. After the incident they brought those affected together so that no one felt alone. This debrief helped push people to talk to someone or within this a group. I did both. Some officers don't like to open up but I truly think it's a crucial for recovery. I also have had several agents with the state reach out and check on me and ask me if I've been keeping in touch with others involved. For myself the services provided were enough, but I don't think anything less would have been sufficient. I know of others involved that will need long term help and may never be completely ok as a result of the incident.

- 2. You testified that the sentiment towards law enforcement officers has become increasingly negative over recent years. In your experience, what factors have contributed to that negative sentiment, and do you see a way that Congress could help to remedy the current trend?**
 - There has absolutely been a large uptick in the negative portrayal of officers nationally. It seems as if true law enforcement supporters are trying harder and harder to support us because they know how bad it has become. On the other side those who oppose/hate the police have grown significantly worse and more dangerous. There is a major issue with the idea of simply complying to an officer when he/she is trying to do their job and enforce the law. The respect once commanded and received by law enforcement is no longer the norm. Our national media has hit a new low in tarnishing the image of law enforcement. I've seen it happen before when the news story breaks and a person was injured or killed at the hands of an officer, which gets all the attention, only to find out later the officer followed their training. Individuals run with that clickbait headline and don't stick around to find out that the criminal was at fault and the officer acted in accordance with all policies. The correct story just doesn't get the 'views,' which in turn, doesn't make the money. I believe our social media companies and our news media need be held accountable. They have lost the high standard or regard for law enforcement, and that is what the American people are consuming each and every day. This has to affect the behavior we come across during our day-to-day interactions.

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse
Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing
“Law Enforcement Officer Safety: Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve”
Questions for the Record
for Officer Zachary Andersen
Submitted August 2, 2022

1. Please provide any thoughts or feedback on one or all of the following topics:
 - A. **S. 4003, the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act of 2022, which Senator Cornyn and I introduced to help law enforcement respond more effectively to people suffering mental or behavioral health crises, and which the Senate Judiciary Committee reported out favorably in May 2022.**
 - De-escalation training not only an interest of mine but something I consider one of my strengths as an officer. Although have been in law enforcement for a few years, I can't tell you how many times I've used de-escalation techniques on the job. It is a critical skill and I have been fortunate enough to have had great training in this area. I have also seen firsthand officers struggle trying to de-escalate situations. I received 40 hours of Crisis Intervention Training with Solutions Point Plus LLC headed by Joseph Smarro and Jesse Trevino. There are lots of great trainings available, but the reason I bring up Solutions Point Plus is because Joe and Jesse are both former Officers of San Antonio, Texas. They have had many real life, relatable experiences that truly makes their Crisis Training as real and the best it can be. De-escalation is a skill and is something that takes practice over time to be successful at. I absolutely believe officers need ongoing de-escalation training. Officers are only seeing an up-tick in mental health and substance abuse subjects in their communities. In my lower populated area of Iowa the majority of calls that require some form of de-escalation are due to a mental health or substance abuse factor.
 - B. **Necessary updates to the Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act, which restored grant funding for law enforcement support services—including suicide-prevention programs and mental health services—and which President Trump signed into law in 2019.**
 - The STOIC Act is so very important for the future of Law Enforcement. Officers are being involved with tragic incidents more than ever before. Not taking care of our Law Enforcement Officers moving forward is not an option. We are already seeing a mass exodus in Law Enforcement and a lack of new recruits. We need to make it mandatory to take care of our officers after a major incident because as we have seen too many times, they will not always help themselves. After these major incidents officers cannot be discarded as if they are broken or a burden on their departments. Departments need to have policies, procedures, and funding to get officers any medical and/or mental assistance needed.

C. The dangers of high-velocity ammunition, which can pose a heightened threat to officer safety.

- I take training with my duty firearms very seriously as I know many officers do, and I believe we need to be adequately trained with any firearm we use or have access to on the job. It is important that departments equip their officers with adequate fire power so that they would not be "out gunned" on the street. The incident I was involved in a shot gun was used, and was fired twice killing Sergeant Jim Smith. Any round of ammunition; shotgun slugs, buck shot, rifle rounds, pistol rounds, can all be fatal. It only takes one round and a person to make that terrible choice to take a life. Our officers should be equipped with all the necessary safety equipment needed and should never be "out gunned" in a dangerous situation. I understand the concern and dangers of high velocity ammunition but I do not believe that is a top threat to officers.

Questions from Senator Thom Tillis for All Witnesses

1. Do you agree that the *Protect and Serve Act* will successfully deter attacks on our brave men and women in blue? Why or why not?

- I do think the protect and serve act will help and be beneficial. Any steps we can take to hold people accountable for these vicious attacks is a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, I believe people committing these vicious attacks have little regard or forethought about what the consequences might be for these severe crimes.

2. Other than the *Protect and Serve Act*, what other actions can Congress take to support law enforcement and stop these senseless and violent attacks?

- Law enforcement has seen a reduction in officer numbers as well as funding. Funding and supporting the services we provide is crucial. Without that support some of the worst criminals can see we're hurting for numbers of officers, adequately trained individuals, or lack of equipment. All these things tarnish our image and make us more susceptible to be targeted because our team is seen as "weak". We need our law enforcement teams to be ones that can't lose. Currently too many are thinking they can beat us, hurt us, or kill us. Criminals think they can win.