

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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June 16, 2021

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security  
Committee on the Judiciary  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Jackson Lee:

We urge you to immediately schedule a hearing of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security to examine dangerous calls to “defund the police” and the corresponding increase in violent crime in American cities. Radical left-wing proposals to defund police forces threaten public safety and put law enforcement officers at risk.

The reckless decisions to defund police forces—and the Biden administration’s apathy towards these actions—have had a real effect on American communities. Homicides have increased in many of the cities that have defunded their police forces.<sup>1</sup> Other violent crimes are also on the rise in many of these cities.<sup>2</sup> After slashing its police budget by nearly \$1 billion, New York City saw a 97 percent rise in shootings and almost a 45 percent increase in homicides.<sup>3</sup> Austin, Texas, saw a 50 percent spike in homicides.<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles, California, experienced an increase of 11.6 percent in homicides.<sup>5</sup>

The defund the police movement has led to a decrease in officer retention rates for police departments. In police departments across the country, veteran officers are opting for early

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<sup>1</sup> Julie Wernau and Joe Barnett, *Police Wrestle with Surge in Crime in U.S. Cities Amid Defunding Efforts*, Wall St. J. (July 11, 2020) [https://www.wsj.com/articles/police-wrestle-with-surge-in-crime-in-u-s-cities-amid-defunding-efforts-11594472400?mod=article\\_inline](https://www.wsj.com/articles/police-wrestle-with-surge-in-crime-in-u-s-cities-amid-defunding-efforts-11594472400?mod=article_inline).

<sup>2</sup> Jon Hilsenrath, *Homicide Spike Hits Most Large U.S. Cities*, Wall St. J. (Aug. 2, 2020), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/homicide-spike-cities-chicago-newyork-detroit-us-crime-police-lockdown-coronavirus-protests-11596395181>.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Chapman, *New York City Homicides and Shootings Rose Dramatically in 2020*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 7, 2021), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-york-city-homicides-and-shootings-rose-dramatically-in-2020-11610055243>.

<sup>4</sup> Jon Hilsenrath, *Homicide Spike Hits Most Large U.S. Cities*, Wall St. J. (Aug 2, 2020), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/homicide-spike-cities-chicago-newyork-detroit-us-crime-police-lockdown-coronavirus-protests-11596395181>.

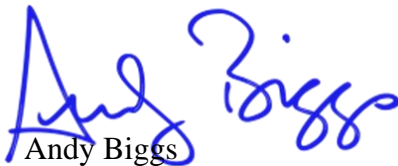
<sup>5</sup> Julie Wernau and Joe Barnett, *Police Wrestle with Surge in Crime in U.S. Cities Amid Defunding Efforts*, Wall St. J. (July 11, 2020) [https://www.wsj.com/articles/police-wrestle-with-surge-in-crime-in-u-s-cities-amid-defunding-efforts-11594472400?mod=article\\_inline](https://www.wsj.com/articles/police-wrestle-with-surge-in-crime-in-u-s-cities-amid-defunding-efforts-11594472400?mod=article_inline).

retirement and departments are failing to attract new officers. In New York City the NYPD saw a 72 percent increase in police retirements last year alone.<sup>6</sup> With over 25 cities across the country either defunding their police departments or considering these radical measures, an estimated 4,000 officers have left the nation's police forces in the last year.<sup>7</sup>

Republicans have condemned violence and been united against radical calls to defund the police. However, many Democrats, including several on this Committee, have expressed support for defunding police forces. In fact, when given an opportunity to support police and denounce the defunding of police, Democrats on the Committee voted unanimously to support state and local governments that defund their police departments.<sup>8</sup> As a candidate for president, President Biden proclaimed that he "absolutely" agreed to "redirect" funds that were traditionally allocated to state and local police departments.<sup>9</sup> He openly declared that America's police forces had "become the enemy."<sup>10</sup>

We ask that you schedule a hearing in the near future to allow Subcommittee Members to hear from law enforcement and civic leaders about how the increase in violent crime attributable to defunding of police. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Andy Biggs  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Crime,  
Terrorism, and Homeland Security



Jim Jordan  
Ranking Member



Steve Chabot  
Subcommittee on Crime,  
Terrorism, and Homeland Security



Louie Gohmert  
Subcommittee on Crime,  
Terrorism, and Homeland Security

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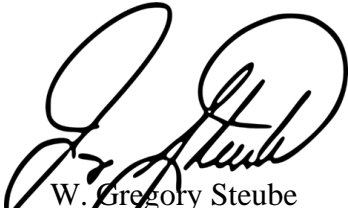
<sup>6</sup> Anthony DeStefano, *Cops Retiring at Levels not Seen Since 2016, the NYPD Says*, *Newsday* (Jan. 27, 2021), <https://www.newsday.com/long-island/crime/nypd-retirements-2020-1.50133524#:~:text=By%20the%20end%20of%202020,2016%2C%20when%201%2C376%20cops%20retired.>

<sup>7</sup> Charles Lehman, *Police Departments on the Brink*, *City J.* (Nov. 11, 2020) <https://www.city-journal.org/police-departments-on-the-brink>.

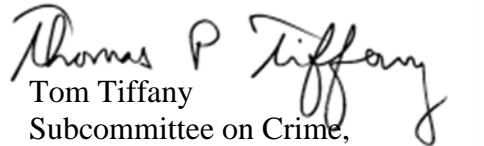
<sup>8</sup> Amend. by Rep. Dan Bishop to H.R. 2453, 117th Cong. (2021).

<sup>9</sup> Molie Mansfield, *'They Become the Enemy' Joe Biden Calls to 'Redirect' Police Funding and Demilitarize Cops, but Camp Says 'no' to Black Lives Matter's 'Defund,'* *The Sun* (July 8, 2020), <https://www.the-sun.com/news/1107488/joe-biden-defund-the-police-campaign/>.


<sup>10</sup> *Id.*



W. Gregory Steube  
Subcommittee on Crime,  
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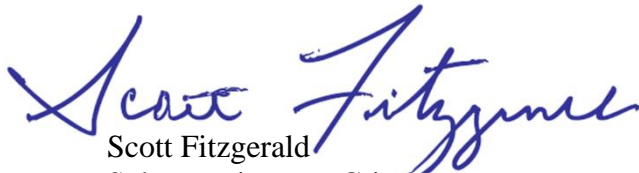
Thomas P. Tiffany  
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Thomas Massie  
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Victoria Spartz  
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