



## MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

July 26, 2022

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The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

I write on behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), a professional organization of law enforcement executives representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada. Thank you for holding today's hearing, "Law Enforcement Officer Safety: Protecting Those Who Protect and Serve."

One of the most troubling recent violent crime trends is the increase in violence directed toward law enforcement officers. According to FBI data, 73 police officers were feloniously killed in 2021, a nearly 60% increase from 2020.<sup>1</sup> Sadly, this trend has continued throughout 2022. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 178 officers were shot in the line of duty, 33 of whom were killed. This is a 19% increase from the same time in 2020.<sup>2</sup> Since January 2022, many MCCA member agencies have had officers injured, and six officers from MCCA member agencies have lost their lives in the line of duty:

- Police Officer II Fernando Arroyos – Los Angeles Police Department
- Police Officer Corille Cortez Jones – Memphis Police Department
- Detective Jason Rivera – New York City Police Department
- Detective Wilbert Mora – New York City Police Department
- Police Officer David Glen Evans – San Antonio Police Department
- Police Officer Loren Michael Courts – Detroit Police Department

Ambush-style attacks and other acts of unprovoked violence against law enforcement officers have become disturbingly commonplace. This has made what is already a complex and dangerous job even more challenging and is resulting in far too many officers being injured or losing their lives during what are otherwise routine law enforcement activities.

Calgary, Alberta  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Montreal, Québec  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Peel Region, Ontario  
Toronto, Ontario  
Vancouver, B.C.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
York Region, Ontario

<sup>1</sup> "Law Enforcement Officer Deaths: 01/01/2021—12/31/2021" Federal Bureau of Investigation, January 1, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> "Monthly Update: Law Enforcement Officers Shot and Killed in the Line of Duty," *National Fraternal Order of Police*, July 1, 2022. <https://national.fop.net/report-shot-killed-20220701>

A general lack of accountability in the criminal justice system has emboldened criminals and eliminated critical deterrents. This has likely contributed to the brazen nature of many of the recent attacks on law enforcement officers. Criminals no longer fear being held accountable or think they'll face consequences for their actions. Bail reform initiatives in some jurisdictions have also gone too far, producing a situation where violent and repeat offenders are often released pretrial. Some of these offenders recidivate while out on bail, and these additional crimes have included violent attacks directed toward law enforcement officers.

Many of the offenders who engage in violence against law enforcement officers are prohibited from possessing a firearm due to their previous criminal history. For example, in one MCCA member city, the suspects were prohibited possessors in more than half of the incidents where officers were shot. The situation is similar in other major cities. Straw purchasing, gun trafficking, and an increase in stolen firearms have made it far too easy for these dangerous individuals to acquire guns. Ghost guns are also starting to be used against law enforcement officers with greater frequency. Assault weapons and high-capacity magazines continue to represent a significant threat to law enforcement officers responding to violent crimes.

Finally, anti-law enforcement rhetoric and actions related to de-policing and defunding have vilified law enforcement officers. MCCA members have indicated that, in the eyes of the criminal element, shifting public opinion has legitimized and glorified violence against law enforcement officers. This is especially troubling, given that supporting law enforcement should not be a political endeavor. Implementing reform while upholding public safety are not mutually exclusive concepts. Every day, MCCA members work to protect and serve their communities while implementing professional law enforcement practices that are fair, equitable, transparent, and procedurally just.

The increase in violence against law enforcement officers must stop immediately. These officers are dedicated public servants who go to work every day looking to serve their communities. The violence directed towards these brave officers demonstrates a complete disregard for the vital job these officers do, their critical role in our communities, and the sanctity of life. Today's hearing represents an important first step, and the MCCA looks forward to continuing to work with the Committee to address this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeri Williams".

Jeri Williams  
Chief, Phoenix Police Department  
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association