

**Chairman James Lankford Opening Statement  
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch**

**Review of the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Requests  
for the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the U.S. Capitol Police**

**June 29, 2017**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

Good morning. The subcommittee will come to order. Welcome to the third of our fiscal year 2018 budget hearings for the Legislative Branch appropriations subcommittee.

We have with us today the Honorable Frank Larkin, Senate Sergeant at Arms, and Chief Matthew Verderosa, Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police. Thank you both for being here today, and welcome Chief Verderosa to your first hearing before this subcommittee.

This hearing was originally planned for the morning of June 14th, the same morning that a man decided to open fire on Members of Congress while they held practice for the Congressional baseball game in Alexandria, Virginia.

It was because of the quick action by Capitol Police officers –Special Agents Crystal Griner and David Bailey – who were on protective detail for House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, that the event was not more tragic.

Because of their heroism, there were no fatalities when there could have been many lives lost. We are so thankful for their courage and continue to wish them well as they work toward full recovery from their injuries.

We are also thankful that Rep. Scalise has been upgraded to fair condition and continues to improve. I understand, just this past weekend, former staffer Matt Mika was discharged from the hospital and has returned home. Our thoughts and prayers are with them both as they continue the journey towards full recovery.

The entire congressional community was deeply affected by the shooting, realizing that it could have been any of us practicing that day, any one of us targeted.

The Sergeant at Arms and Capitol Police each have unique missions, and now more than ever, they carry significant importance. Threats, both internal and external, are ever present and emergent in the environment in which we operate.

Both of your agencies work diligently to protect Members of Congress, our staff, and the over 4 million visitors to the Capitol campus each year. It is a delicate balance to manage safety while granting access; to respect privacy while maintaining security.

We truly appreciate the dedication of the men and women of your agencies to enable us, the Congress, to do our work – thank you.

As I have mentioned at our first two hearings this year, we are again faced with a budget environment that will require a very difficult and important discussion on how to move forward in the coming fiscal year.

The value gained from your requested increases must be weighed against our duty to be fiscally responsible. We will need to make wise choices about our priorities.

The Sergeant at Arms (SAA) request for FY 2018 is \$204.6 million, an increase of approximately \$7.2 million above the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. The request includes \$73.1 million for salaries and benefits, and a request of \$131.6 million for expenses.

The majority of the requested increase supports cybersecurity initiatives to prevent and protect against internal and external threats alike. The nature of these evolving intrusions have recently received increased attention and scrutiny, and it is important that we take the necessary steps to prevent the compromise of our Senate networks.

The Capitol Police requests a total of \$426.6 million, an increase of \$33.3 million above the fiscal year 2017 enacted level.

Of the funding requested, \$351 million is for salaries and benefits to cover fixed cost increases for pay and benefits of the existing staff, and an additional 72 sworn officers and 48 civilians, for a total force of 1,943 sworn officers and 420 civilians.

The request for the expenses account is \$75.2 million, an increase of \$7 million above the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. This increase supports lifecycle replacement of detection and screening equipment, as well as training and uniforms for officers.

Much of your requested increase comes from expanding mission requirements and I look forward to hearing more about those needs today, as well as any additional needs you have identified given the recent incident.

And now, I'd like to turn to my Ranking Member, Senator Murphy, for any opening remarks he may like to make.

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