

H.R. 5798: Protect Our Nation's Capital Emergency Act of 2023

"We don't have the officers that we need, and sadly we've lost 300 to 400 officers in the last 4 years...we haven't had officers in our schools and we have policies that make it difficult to recruit new officers." – DC Mayor Muriel Bowser (9/27/23)

The District of Columbia is in Crisis

Violent crime in The District of Columbia ended 2023 with violent crime up 39% from 2022. D.C. residents and business owners are under siege. Everyone – including Members of Congress, Staff, and tourists – are bearing the consequences. In a shocking statistic, MPD recorded 958 carjackings with 740 (77%) involving a firearm – a year-to-year increase of 109% in carjackings using a gun.

Offense	2022	2023	% Change
Homicide	203	274	35%
Sex Abuse	184	185	1%
Assault w/ Weapon	1,387	1,407	1%
Robbery	2,076	3,470	67%
Violent Crime - Total	3,850	5,336	39%
Burglary	1,054	1,092	4%
Motor Vehicle Theft	3,756	6,829	82%
Theft from Auto	7,827	7,797	0%
Theft (Other)	10,814	13,349	23%
Arson	4	11	175%
Property Crime - Total	23,455	29,078	24%
All Crime - Total	27,305	34,414	26%

In its January 2024 Monthly staffing report, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) reported 3,215 total staff (non-recruits) – **down nearly 600 officers from 2020**. To put a finer point on it, since January 2020, MPD has seen over 1,300 officers separate from the force with over 500 of those officers choosing to resign, walking away from a career with MPD - going to other jurisdictions or leaving the profession. The MPD is at a 50-year low for sworn staffing.

How Did We Get Here?

In 2022, the D.C. City Council voted to strip officers of their collective bargaining and due process rights with respect to disciplinary actions through the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act. Congress passed a bill (H.J. Res 42) to provide these, and other, rights back to MPD, but President Biden vetoed that legislation citing other provisions in his statement.

What Can Be Done?

Congress has the authority to ensure the safety of the District of Columbia and reinstate these protections. Given the alarming rise in crime in every part of the city, there is no better time to support the police officers and give them the resources they need.

H.R. 5798: The Protect Our Nation's Capital Emergency Act

- Reinstate collective bargaining rights as it pertains to discipline for the DC Police Union members.
- Reinstate the 90-day timeline for disciplinary action, eliminating open-ended uncertainty or the prolonging of this process as a means of additional punishment.

These two provisions are regularly cited as the reason officers are leaving MPD and this narrow approach will offer the best opportunity to recruit and retain highly qualified police officers to enforce the laws of Washington, DC.

Notable Support: D.C. Police Union / National Fraternal Order of Police

To learn more or cosponsor the legislation, please contact Niko Keddy with Rep. Garbarino's office at Niko.Keddy@mail.house.gov or x57896.