



United States Capitol Police Labor Committee

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PRESS RELEASE

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USCP committed Unfair Labor Practices against Police Union

The US Capitol Police Department has committed Unfair Labor Practices against the Capitol Police Union, as ruled by the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR).

In a recently unsealed decision, a Hearing Officer found USCP committed multiple Unfair Labor Practices when it suspended the Union's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) almost one year ago, on March 20th 2020.

At the time, USCP stated the suspension was effective immediately and necessary as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The USCP never explained why the pandemic required the suspension of the collective bargaining agreement in its entirety, nor the rationale for declining to discuss the decision with the officers' union.

The Hearing Officer wrote, "it strains credulity that it was necessary for the Respondent (USCP) to suspend over 40 articles and approximately 200 provisions in the parties' CBA to carry out its mission when declaring the pandemic an emergency."

Union Chairman Gus Papathanasiou, welcomed the decision saying, "Former Chief Sund, then Assistant Chief Pittman and Assistant Chief Thomas made the decision to use the pandemic as an excuse to suspend Police Officers' union rights."

"In the middle of a pandemic, they suspended a Collective Bargaining Agreement that included important health and safety provisions for front-line officers."

“This is the environment Capitol Police Officers have been working in for a prolonged period of time, with a leadership who refused to engage, to inform or to treat them with respect.”

The Chairman says, “You can draw a straight line from this working environment to January 6th 2021, when Capitol Police Officers were left without vital information to prepare them for facing an armed insurrection at the Capitol.”

“The department has never explained why they needed to suspend the entire CBA in response to the pandemic. They never explained it to us nor Members of Congress, who specifically asked them for a reason in writing.”

“The reason was very clear to the Union, that the Department saw this as an opportunity to shut down communications with us, in a failed attempt to break the Police Officers’ Union.”

“Our officers voted 25 years ago to unionize, and this department is still fighting that decision. This Union is united and has aspirations to work with the leaders of this Department who are willing to work with us in order to improve this agency.”

“I want to thank Congressmen Hoyer, Brown, Connelly, Pascrell, Beyer, Raskin, Trone and Congresswoman Wexton. All these Members of Congress wrote to the department back in May 2020 seeking an explanation from the department.”

“They have all been longtime supporters of the front-line officers, and as the Hearing Officer wrote in his decision, the department was non-responsive to them too, about suspending the CBA.”

The Hearing Officer ordered the USCP to cease and desist from refusing to bargain with the Union and to rescind the suspension of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

A subsequent order was given to make the decision public.

Link to the OCWR Order:

<https://www.ocwr.gov/sites/default/files/Board%20Order.pdf>