



# United States Capitol Police Labor Committee

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Capitol Police: “We need resources and accountability”**

On January 6, 2021, more than 1,200 USCP officers were on duty as thousands of supporters of former President Donald Trump stormed the Capitol and an attempt was made to stop the certification of the 2020 Presidential election.

In defense of the Capitol, more than 140 USCP and Metropolitan Police officers were injured, many seriously hurt. USCP Officer Brian Sicknick, age 42, died of a stroke the day after the attack. USCP Officer Howie Liebengood subsequently took his own life as have three Metropolitan Police Officers who defended the Capitol that day.

Chairman of the Capitol Police Officers’ Union, Gus Papathanasiou said “No officer on duty January 6<sup>th</sup> walked away unscathed, physically or mentally. We paid a terrible price and some of those injuries are so severe the officers will never return to duty and will live with lingering pain for the rest of their lives.”

“Everyone by now has seen video of that day, and we commend Officer Edwards for her own compelling testimony this evening about those events. No one should ever forget; our officers did their job against extraordinary odds and succeeded in securing the safety of Vice President Pence and all the Members of Congress.”

“USCP officers are now watching these hearings, and hoping they’ll serve as a catalyst for two outcomes. First, Congress needs to support and resource the USCP to meet the high threat environment we face every single day.

“In 2018, Members of Congress received approximately 5,200 threats. That has jumped 84 percent to above 9,600 threats last year. This is our new normal, yet we don’t have the manpower and resources to meet this threat.”

“General Russell Honoré conducted a security review following the attack and concluded USCP must hire an additional 884 officers. This needs to be done. Even more urgent, is the need to keep the officers we have who are frankly considering leaving this department.”

“The pay adjustment we received this year helps and is appreciated. Yet, 18 months after the attack, Congress has failed to address the stark disparity in retirement benefits for the USCP compared to other federal law enforcement agencies.”

“For decades, this has been a reason our officers have moved to other agencies. For a brief moment, we felt this would finally be addressed by a provision in the 2021 House funding bill. To the utter disbelief of front-line officers, it was stripped from the bill at the last minute.”

“We did our job on January 6<sup>th</sup>, paying a high price. All we ask is for Congress to give us the manpower and resources we need to protect this institution. That starts with ensuring we can recruit and keep officers, which means treating them fairly.”

“Second, we need accountability, starting with our own leaders. Make no mistake, the breach of the U.S. Capitol was a failure of our leadership, as outlined in the Senate report earlier this year. It’s unconscionable that Officer Edwards was on the West front of the Capitol with no universal fence, no riot gear and too few officers to back her up. She could have been killed.”

“Front-line officers do not understand how the supervisor in charge of Intelligence leading up to January 6<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Chief Pittman, could have ignored all the warning signs and left our Officers, Members of Congress, and the Congressional Community so vulnerable to an attack. What we really do not understand how she remains the head of intelligence today given her utter failure.”

“Accountability also means holding responsible those who perpetrated the attack and those who conspired to make it happen. We trust the Department of Justice will vigorously pursue all those who assaulted our officers and those who threatened the peaceful transfer of power.”

“We must uncover the truth and all that led to the attack of January 6<sup>th</sup>. We ask that you honor the sacrifice of all Police Officers, with a full and fair investigation, to include all of the riots our fellow brothers and sisters in blue experienced

throughout the country during 2020. All of law enforcement must be supported and given the funding as well as the resources to protect this great nation.”