



## U.S. Department of Justice

### Federal Bureau of Investigation

Office of the Director

Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

October 15, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

When I appeared before the House Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) Subcommittee on April 11, 2024, committee members shared concerns about serious threats facing the Nation—the scourge of fentanyl trafficked across the border claiming countless lives, violent crime that remains far too high in many communities, the heightened threat of international terrorism following the horrific terrorist attacks by Hamas on October 7, and the continued escalation of cyber and ransomware attacks. As I shared in April, I am hard-pressed to think of a time in my law enforcement career when we have seen so many different national security and criminal threats elevated all at once.

This moment of elevated threats is the worst possible time to handicap the FBI's ability to protect the American people and support our partners in state and local law enforcement in defense of public safety. The fiscal year (FY) 2025 House Appropriations Committee (HAC) mark would require the elimination of approximately 3,025 positions—2,000 by the end of FY 2025 in addition to the 1,025 positions cut in FY 2024. This reduction includes approximately 1,100 special agent positions across all the different threats we work.

When it comes to national security, the Committee's proposal would, in effect, cede the battlefield to our enemies. Every day, the FBI is investigating threats from groups like ISIS, al-Qaida, Hizballah and their affiliates, as well as those inspired and radicalized by these groups.

Adversaries such as China, Russia, and Iran continue to use every means at their disposal to undermine our national and economic security. When our enemies are devoting more resources against us, the Committee's proposal would force the FBI to eliminate almost 1,500 positions from our national security programs, including counterterrorism, counterintelligence, terrorist screening functions, cyber, and weapons of mass destruction.

At a time when the dangers of fentanyl have reached epidemic proportions and violent crime remains far too high, the Committee's proposal would mean 1,000 fewer FBI personnel working violent crime, cartel, fentanyl, gang, and crimes against children cases. The FBI's authorities, expertise, and resources are crucial to combatting these threats, as we work jointly with our federal, state, and local partners to keep American communities safe.

Despite the assertion that the Committee's budget "robustly supports local law enforcement," the reality is that this budget would force the FBI to curtail assistance to our state and local partners. The Committee's budget threatens a wide range of FBI-operated services that state and local officers rely on for safety. Those include FBI databases for criminal history information accessed by officers millions of times each day to know whether the person they are confronting is dangerous or even on a watchlist. These budget cuts compromise the FBI's ability to maintain the system and provide much-needed improvements, thereby jeopardizing our ability to provide the real-time data officers rely on to stay safe. At a time when the number of law enforcement officers feloniously killed is reaching record highs, curtailing the FBI's ability to develop or even operate such programs would undoubtedly place officers in the field in danger.

I speak with police chiefs and sheriffs on a near-weekly basis, and I can tell you that I am consistently asked for even **more** support from the FBI—certainly not less. The FBI's services are crucial for state and local partners to keep their communities safe. The FBI's ability to provide traditional and digital forensic analysis, cell phone location tracking, and other investigative tools—at no cost—is often the difference between life and death in local and state investigations.

State and local partners investigating violent crime cases like sexual assaults and murders depend on the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) to provide DNA analysis and matches to solve crimes and protect victims. During FY 2023 alone, processing 58,000 samples per month into CODIS, the FBI's DNA matching provided 1,035 investigative leads to law enforcement agencies. The Committee's budget fails to sufficiently fund the FBI's ability to process the tens of thousands of DNA samples collected every month at the southern border—samples that have assisted our state and local partners in identifying criminals who committed sexual assaults and homicides.

The training and certifications provided by the FBI to state and local partners are oftentimes the only advanced training officers will receive. FBI trainings such as crisis negotiation and public safety bomb technician certification—the only civilian certification program in the country—have extensive waitlists with officers waiting months for the opportunity to attend. The FBI's 80-year-old National Academy provides training in disciplines such as behavioral science, law enforcement communication, and forensic science—training that

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leads to better law enforcement work, meaningful partnerships, and safer communities. While there have been brief pauses due to government shutdowns and COVID-19, if the Committee's proposal goes into effect, the FBI's ability to sustain the National Academy will be at risk. And, of course, this proposed budget would put in jeopardy countless other FBI trainings, relied on by our state and local partners—courses on critical topics like active shooters, crime scene analysis, and cyber-related threats.

Also crucial to keeping our communities safe from terrorists and violent gangs, among other threats, are the over 750 FBI task forces that would be severely harmed by the Committee's budget. Every day, FBI special agents work in partnership with federal, state, local, and tribal officers and deputies on joint task forces—a force multiplier to augment our joint efforts to keep communities safe. In fact, on many of our violent crime, transnational organized crime, and violent crimes against children squads, task force officers outnumber special agents. In turn, police chiefs and sheriffs not only depend on FBI task forces to help make their communities safer; they and their officers also rely on the training, tools, intelligence, and other resources provided by the FBI.

Through our task forces, last year alone the FBI and its partners arrested 18,000 violent criminals—an average of around 50 per day. If the Committee's proposal goes into effect, I am alarmed by the prospect of how these cuts would impede our ability to take violent criminals, fentanyl distributors, and human traffickers off the streets, just to name a few. With fewer special agent positions in FY 2025, the FBI would not be able to appropriately support its 750 task forces or participate in other critical task forces, which would hinder not just the FBI, but also state, local, and tribal law enforcement and undoubtedly place communities at risk.

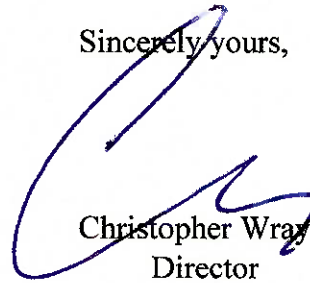
Each day, the men and women of the FBI are making a real difference in communities across the Nation, tackling some of the most complex national security and criminal threats with perseverance, professionalism, and integrity. Over the past five years, the FBI has arrested over 1,000 subjects as a result of our international terrorism investigations. Last year, we took over 1,000 actions against cyber adversaries, including arrests, criminal charges, dismantlements, and disruptions. We have approximately 2,000 active investigations that are just related to the Chinese government's efforts to steal information. We are investigating over 350 cases linked to cartel leadership. Over the past five years, our crimes against children and human trafficking programs have arrested over 12,000 defendants, located over 7,700 children, and identified even more. Slashing resources that the FBI needs to fulfill its mission will jeopardize the essential work being done by our personnel to protect the American people.

Make no mistake—if the Committee's budget for the FBI goes into effect, it will impact the FBI's ability to keep the American people safe. Terrorists, fentanyl traffickers, gangs, cyber adversaries, and hostile nation states will be all too eager, and indeed emboldened, to take advantage of the degradation of U.S. national security and law enforcement capacity that will happen if the FBI has to operate under the budget proposed by the Committee. We cannot afford to let our guard down in this way. We need Congressional support to fully fund FBI operations so the FBI can defend the Homeland and protect the American people.

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If you or your staff have any questions about the detrimental impact of the proposed FY 2025 HAC mark, please feel free to contact the FBI's Chief Financial Officer, Nicholas Dimos, at (202) 324-7343.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Wray', is written over the printed name and title.

Christopher Wray  
Director