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NEW STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING VIOLENT CRIME: DRAWING LESSONS FROM RECENT EXPERIENCE

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UNITED STATES SENATE

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NEW STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING VIOLENT CRIME: DRAWING LESSONS FROM RECENT EXPERIENCE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in room SD–562, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Patrick J. Leahy, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Leahy, Whitehouse, and Specter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICK J. LEAHY, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

Chairman LEAHY. Good morning. The Committee will come to order.

Today the Committee turns to the critical issue of violent crime. While we saw a great reduction in violent crime in the 1990s, that seems to have suddenly stalled.

The rate of homicide per person in the United States is nearly six times that of Germany, four times greater than Great Britain or Canada—and I watch that in Canada because my home is less than an hour's drive from the Canadian border. Since 2000, the number of murders and armed robberies has remained nearly unchanged across the Nation.

But the statistics do not tell the whole story. Nationwide trends no longer effectively explain what is truly happened in our cities and towns. Too many communities have seen a resurgence of violent crimes, and one such community is Rutland, Vermont. Senator Specter and I went up last spring to hold a hearing there to study that city's effective responses to a disturbing spike in violent crime, and picked Rutland because we are just not used to violent crime in Vermont. And there we had had a sudden spike of it. I again want to publicly thank Senator Specter for taking the time to come up to Rutland.

Now, some communities have seen declines in violent crimes since 2000, and some major cities, like New York, that have the resources to try out new strategies, they are reporting historically low crime rates. I want to look behind the national statistics and trends. I want to know about new community-based strategies that have proven to be more substantial than ever, or they could well lead to another era of substantial crime reduction.

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I know Senator Biden, the former Chairman of this Committee, he knows these issues very well. He has been at the forefront of these crime-fighting issues, with his leadership in writing and passing legislation to create and fund the COPS program and other innovative programs saw a drop in violent crime we saw through the 1990s. And I appreciate Senator Specter calling him a leader on crime control. He has long supported Senator Biden's efforts.

Of course, we are fortunate in this Committee to have Senator Specter with his own experience as a prosecutor and Senator Whitehouse with his experience as a prosecutor.

Violent crime statistics are a new disturbing dilemma. The rates of incarceration over the past 8 years has spiked to levels once thought unimaginable. We imprison more than 2.3 million adults in America. That is more than any other Nation in the world. For the first time ever, 1 every 100 adult men in America is in prison or in jail. The rates are even more startling for certain minorities. For Hispanics, 1 out of every 36 men is locked up; African-Americans, 1 out of every 15. Black men between the ages of 20 and 34, it is 1 out of every 9. And if simply locking people up was the answer, that would be very simple. But we lock them up and crime does not drop. In fact, in places where we have locked up the most offenders, crime continues to cripple our communities, particularly in poor and minority neighborhoods.

I have always felt when I was prosecutor that this had to be something all of us had to get a handle on. But most veteran police chiefs will tell you, as Los Angeles Police Chief Bill Bratton told this Committee earlier this year, you just cannot arrest your way out of a problem. We can have real success in combating violent crimes if we focus on our communities. Supported by the COPS program, during the last administration we saw community policing do a great deal. And new community initiatives have focused on combating youth violence. I think of High Point, North Carolina, where the local police had all but written off the West End. For decades, it was dominated by drugs and prostitution, but in 2002, they decided on a new approach building on earlier models proven successful in the Boston Cease Fire initiative. And I remember Senator Kennedy, a valued and the most senior member of this Committee, telling us over and over again to look at what they are doing with Cease Fire and how effective it was. Instead of just doing more sweeps and arresting the usual suspects, police met with local community leaders, clergy, service providers, united all the parts of the community to attack the problem together.

One of our witnesses, Reverend Summey, who is here, is going to tell us the results are clear. Within weeks, drug dealers and prostitutes were gone from the street. Crime fell by more than 50 percent. Five years later, it is still down.

Now, it involved more than just the police making arrests. We cannot make the mistake of thinking this is simply a problem for the police. The police will do their job. But it needs the community, it needs the business community, families, educators, religious leaders. All have got to work on doing this and have a real spirit of unity.

[The prepared statement of Senator Leahy appears as a submission for the record.]

So I am not telling these witnesses anything they do not know, and I notice we have been joined by Congressman Kennedy of Rhode Island. He has a wonderful first name, Congressman Patrick Kennedy.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEAHY. I have known and admired him for so many years. I am delighted to have him here. And I see, Colonel, you know him, and I assume you know him in your professional capacity, not because he has been one of those miscreants you might have back in Rhode Island.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEAHY. Senator Specter?

STATEMENT OF HON. ARLEN SPECTER, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Senator SPECTER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for convening this hearing on this very important subject with a very distinguished array of witnesses who are here today.

I have long believed that we could cut violent crime very substantially if we did a few things. One is to incarcerate career criminals for life, and the second facet is to have realistic rehabilitation for those who go to jail but who are going to be released.

When I was district attorney of Philadelphia, I found the recidivists were the big problem, the robbers and the burglars. And one of the first bills I introduced, which ultimately became law after having help from Senator Thurmond and Senator Leahy and others, was the armed career criminal bill, which provides the life sentence in the Federal system. It is 15 years to life for criminals who commit three major offenses.

The issue of realistic rehabilitation, we all know and understand that it takes tremendous resources to have a starting point of detoxification, since we know that 70 percent of those arrested have either a drug or alcohol problem, and then training, education, literacy training to start with, and then education, so they do not go through the revolving door, the recidivist problem. And we know that they are going to be released unless they are career criminals and have life sentences. But that takes resources, which we have never been willing to commit.

The cost of crime is really incalculable. Some people put it at $500 billion, or half a trillion dollars. I frankly think that is low. And if it is accurate, it does not cover the pain and suffering or loss of life or the terror which grips cities and communities where awaiting some strange sound at night worrying about burglars or where you walk down the streets even in the biggest cities with very substantial police control.

More recently, a number of us have banded together to try to get mentoring. We find that there is a resurgence of crime problems from young people who come from one-parent families, and even then the mother is working and there is no guidance. And if we can provide a surrogate parent, something could be done. And we have appropriated very substantial sums of money to try to promote the mentoring issue. So these are issues which we really need to tackle in a much more determined way than we have so far.

I regret that I will not be able to stay to hear the witnesses, but I have staff here and I will review the transcript. I want to pay special note to Dr. Alfred Blumstein, a 40-year veteran of criminal law expertise from Carnegie Mellon, and the other very distinguished witnesses I know have a great deal to contribute on this subject.

As you may know, I have multiple obligations. Right now the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee is meeting. Senator Leahy is a member of that Committee as well, so we will split up, Patrick, and you cover the important stuff, and I will go down and try to make a contribution on Defense Appropriations.

Thank you very much.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. It is a time with many conflicts. Fortunately, we have the staffs of all the Senators, appropriate Senators here.

Senator SPECTER. Patrick, one addendum to your comment about Rutland. I think that hearing in Rutland that this Committee had was a very important hearing because it focused on small communities. And too often we think of crime as a big-city problem. And it is nice to have the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee in your State because he can give a little extra attention. I used to do that for Pennsylvania. Maybe I will again someday.

Chairman LEAHY. I will come join you.

Senator SPECTER. Well, you already have, Pat. But that was a very important hearing, and you should have seen the turnout. If we had a proportionate turnout, we would have to put this in the basketball arena, but the place was mobbed. People were really interested to see what the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee was going to do. And it was symbolic of the terrible problem which grips the whole country, not just the big cities.

Thank you again.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you. I appreciate that. Again, as we know, especially in small towns, we are used to not locking our doors. We are used to not worrying about things. And when violence hits and people get shot and knifed and killed, it is doubly shocking.

Senator Whitehouse, I know that you have a constituent—well, now you have two constituents here, but did you want to say something before we begin?

STATEMENT OF HON. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would be very, very proud to have the chance to introduce and say a few words about Colonel Esserman, who is the Chief of Police of our capital city of Providence, and I suspect that his presence here is what has attracted my colleague and the senior member of our delegation Patrick Kennedy here. We are very honored to have Representative Kennedy with us, and, of course, I am keenly aware that I am sitting next to his father's seat here, and I am looking forward to having him back in January, as he promised.

He has been a lawyer, he has been a prosecutor, he has been general counsel to police agencies. He was the assistant chief in New Haven, the chief of the New York MTA Metro North Depart-

ment, the chief of the Stamford, Connecticut, Police Department. And then he came to the city of Providence. And I had been the U.S. Attorney for Rhode Island, I had been the Attorney General. I had had intense, as you can imagine, Mr. Chairman, relations with the Providence Police Department. And it would be fair and probably an understatement to describe the time as a troubled police department. Cars were unaccounted for. Kilo bricks of cocaine mysteriously disappeared, and then as mysteriously reappeared. Gold and jewelry from the evidence impound went missing. Promotion exams were provided in advance to favored members of the department. Civil rights and criminal prosecutions were as likely to be brought against members of the Providence Police Department as with members of the Providence Police Department, and politics ruled throughout the department. And it was a challenging atmosphere. I have many friends in the Providence Police Department who had the extraordinary patience and courage to hang in there through these very dark years. And Chief Esserman's arrival brought an end to that period of darkness. He demanded political independence and received it from a bright new reform Mayor, David Cicilline, and began the work of restoring the Providence Police Department.

And I can tell you firsthand from my friends on the force who hung in there how relieved and gratified they are to be able to represent a department that they are now proud of. I can tell you that this is a man who sees his work as a police officer in the larger context of the social fabric in which the police operate, in the larger context of the human nature of the people with whom the police must deal, and in the larger context of the community structure that supports police law enforcement efforts. And he has been extremely successful in all those ways. And it is not just talk. It is real results.

I have a list that shows some of the successes that have occurred in Providence in the last 5 years under his watch: murder rate down 39 percent; rape down 64 percent; robbery down 30 percent; aggravated assault down 17 percent; burglary down 21 percent; motor vehicle theft down 44 percent; larceny down 28 percent; 14,000 major crimes in 2002; now under 10,000 in 2007.

So it is proof that when you go about police work in a sensible way, when you do it right, you get real results. And as I think all of our witnesses know, these accomplishments were done against a tide in which the numbers had been increasing across the country in the same period, in large part because of very bad policy choices made by the Bush administration to emphasize on homeland security with vast resources, a new, entirely unmanageable Federal Department, billions of dollars poured all over the country for improbable vehicles and things like that—all while hometown security was being sacrificed. And at least in Rhode Island, as important as homeland security is, the hometown security of 5,000 less crimes in our capital city will make a larger difference in the lives of real families than some small police department have a $250,000 radiation-proof astronaut recovery vehicle, or whatever it is that they have been getting.

Cops on the streets and a sensible relationship with the community is the key, and Chief Esserman has produced real results with

that strategy, and I am very proud to welcome him to this Committee.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you, Senator Whitehouse. And I also understand that the Chief makes it a point to periodically walk a beat himself. I commend you for that.

Dr. Alfred Blumstein is the J. Erik Jonsson Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research, former Dean of the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon, award-winning researcher and author in the field of criminology. He was recently awarded the 2007 Stockholm Prize in Criminology; served as Past President of the American Society of Criminology; served as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, the State's criminal justice planning agency; served on the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing; a bachelor's degree in engineering and physics and a doctorate in operations research from Cornell.

I can see why Senator Specter wanted to welcome you here. Please go ahead with your testimony. I am going to ask each one of you to speak, and then we are going to ask some questions.

STATEMENT OF ALFRED BLUMSTEIN, PROFESSOR, H. JOHN HEINZ III SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT, CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. BLUMSTEIN. Thank you very much, Senator Leahy. I am very honored to be before this Committee, which has had this wonderful record of trying to bring intelligence, rationality, thoughtfulness, and care to the whole issue of crime and criminal justice.

What I want to do is focus first on some of the crime trends that we have seen and use that to highlight some of the lessons learned. In my testimony, I have a graph of murder and robbery rates in the United States, and I have some spare copies if anyone needs them. What we saw was a peak in about 1980, which was very much of a demographic phenomenon. Crime rates came down rather sharply after that, and were going to continue coming down until crack made its appearance in the early 1980s. And then we saw major efforts at trying to deal with the crack problem by locking people up to a massive degree. Unfortunately, the market was resilient and recruited replacements for those people that were taken off the street.

It is easy to think of the pathological rapist being taken off the street, and when that happens his crimes are also taken off the street with him. That's an incapacitation.

When we take the drug seller off, a replacement can easily come in. The reason crime started going up in 1985 was that those replacements were young kids, and they had to carry guns, and they were far less restrained and far more dangerous than the people they replaced. And they were tightly networked with each other. So, one of the unintended consequences of that massive incarceration of crack dealers was the recruitment of replacements and rising crime, so that we had about a 25-percent increase in violence between 1985 when those replacements started to come in until a peak in about 1993.

Then it became evident that crack was pretty dangerous, unpleasant, undesirable, and so we saw a major turndown in new users of crack, and so we saw a major reduction in the 1990s of about over 40 percent in both murder and robbery, which are the two best measured crimes of violence and certainly the two most serious ones.

In 2000, the rates flattened out. This flat trend in murder and robbery has persisted within a percent or two since 2000 until 2007. Now, that does not mean that the entire Nation is flat, but it means that there were real national trends in demography and in crack markets. But what we are seeing now is individual city phenomena, much more local rather than responding to big national trends. Some cities have been going up, some have been coming down, some down and up, others up and down. So it is much more a local phenomenon, and that is where the help is needed at this point.

There is a lot of learning going on in some cities. There is a lot of experimentation going on. And it is clear that there are opportunities to tap into the developing knowledge. And it strikes me that it would be very desirable for the Congress to encourage the Office of Justice Programs to build an evaluation center that will evaluate some of these trends and accompany that with a technical assistance function that will go out to the cities that are seeing spurts of violence.

When we see the spurts, it is often one of two cases. One is new violence associated with drug markets, since drug markets typically resolve their disputes by violence because they cannot go to the courts. What we see is a major return from prison of some of the former drug dealers, and often they generate violence by their demand to regain their territory.

A second major factor when we see a spurt is what Elijah Anderson talks about in his book "Code of the Street," where he studied the inner-city areas. He finds that most people there are decent people, but then there are what he calls the "street people". They have little prospect for the future, they see little opportunity for themselves; and all they see is the opportunity to engage in violence especially if someone disrespects them. If we could only do something to shape those folks up, opportunities abound there.

What we need is a major focus on—in addition to this technical assistance, we have got to build some capability for the future through research, statistics, and development, and we have the opportunity to do that through the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. That has been lying fallow for the past administration, and there is a real need for building some knowledge about how to control violence better, and to do that requires building their budget. They have under $50 million for the whole criminal justice system. Contrast that with the National Institute of Dental Research, which has almost $400 million to deal with dental issues.

It is clear that we need a depoliticization of that research and statistics activity, and the Congress some years ago made the NIJ and BJS independent of the political environment in the Department of Justice. But in a surreptitious move in the PATRIOT Act, that independence was taken away. And so those agencies are no

longer independent, and more responsive to political pressures. I would encourage the Congress to deal with the need to maintain that integrity and independence as their program develops.

I would, furthermore, encourage the Congress in this era, when we are at a crime rate situation that is lower than we have seen since the 1960s, to consider more fundamental efforts like getting at child development and other such issues. I would encourage the Congress to take seriously the need for bringing the technical capability that is showing up in various places out to the smaller cities that are seeing spurts in violence.

I thank you very much for the opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Blumstein appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. I apologize for keeping you on the clock, but we also have a bill of mine on the floor, if Senator Whitehouse would help while I go back and forth.

Jeremy Travis is President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York. He worked for more than three decades on criminal justice issues in positions with the Justice Department and the New York City Police Department, now in academia. He has been a leader in and out of Government in developing new approaches to criminal justice policy. He served from 1994 to 2000 as the Director of the National Institute of Justice at the Department of Justice. He promoted the Community-Oriented Policing Services, COPS program; Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters for the New York Police Department; Chief Counsel for the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice in the House of Representatives, and many other things. Mr. Travis certainly knows his way around capital Hill.

Good to have you here, sir.

STATEMENT OF JEREMY TRAVIS, PRESIDENT, JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Mr. TRAVIS. Thank you very much, Senator, members of the Committee. I am honored as well to be invited to offer some thoughts this morning as the Committee undertakes this important task of looking at violence in America, and I am very honored to be on such a distinguished panel.

In my time before the Committee, I would like to offer three perspectives on the current state of violence in America and then offer three recommendations that might inform discussions as we now look forward to a new administration and a new Congress in the coming year.

As the Chairman said at the outset, even though we have every reason to be pleased with the reduction in violence in America over the past 15 years, we have no reason to be complacent. On the contrary, I would like to offer as our beginning perspective an international perspective, again, underscored by the Chairman, that if we compare our rates of violence to those in developed countries, we see that the rates of homicide in America are four times the rates of homicide in England and Wales, and in my testimony I have provided other comparisons. This gives us, I think, reason to work much harder to bring crime rates down, and particularly to

focus on what is a distinguishing characteristic in America, which is the availability of illegal guns.

As both the Chairman and Dr. Blumstein pointed out, we have a new phenomenon in the country, which is the second perspective, which is a divergence of trends at the local level from overall national trends. This has not been the case in the past, but we are seeing now in some cities violence rates are going up while in other cities they are going down quite dramatically.

I offer two examples. If you look at the national data, between 2005 and 2006 homicide rates increased slightly, by 1.8 percent; robbery rates increased slightly by 3 and 6 percent, respectively. But in those same years, we saw homicides decreasing by 25 percent in Dallas and 31 percent in Portland, yet increasing 23 percent in Philadelphia and 25 percent in Seattle. Similarly, robbery rates were essentially flat over those 2 years in New York and Los Angeles, but increased by 44 percent and 63 percent in Milwaukee and Oakland.

We do not have a good understanding of why it is that the local trends are diverging in the ways that they are, and we need to have that understanding in order to develop a sound policy.

I want to focus, however, on a third perspective on violence in America, which is for me the most instructive for the future policy directions of this Committee and the country. Crime, as you know, is concentrated in urban America, particularly in the poorest urban neighborhoods, which are typically communities of color. In those communities, violence is a daily fact of life. I will cite two illustrations that I think make this point quite vividly.

A group of colleagues of mine in Rochester, New York, under the prior administration did work on reducing violence in that city and carried out an analysis by Professor John Klofas of the Rochester Institute of Technology, which found that violent crime was concentrated in a core urban area that he called the "high-crime crescent." And my guess is we would find the same phenomenon in every urban jurisdiction.

He then went on to calculate homicide rates in this part of Rochester and did the following analysis in my testimony comparing the overall homicide rate in the Nation, which was at the time 8 per 100,000. He looked within the age group that is of interest, 15- to 19-year-olds; it was triple that. He looked at men within that age group; it was quadruple that, it was 36 per 100,000. He looked at African-American males in that age group in Rochester; it was 264 per 100,000. And for black males aged 15 to 19 in this high-crime crescent, the homicide rate was 520 per 100,000, or 65 times the national rate.

So when talk about violence in America, we really do need to focus our attention on those communities where violence is most prevalent.

A second example, this one from Cincinnati, this is an analysis conducted by my colleague, David Kennedy, and others at the University of Cincinnati. It looked at gang networks in Cincinnati and found that there were in that city 48 high-rate offending groups—you can call them "drug crews," you can call them "gangs," whatever-—48 high-rate offending groups with 1,100 members total. And these individuals, these groups, were involved either as offenders

and/or as victims in nearly three-quarters of the homicides in Cincinnati.

So these studies from these two jurisdictions underscore for me the importance of drilling down deep to look at the phenomenon of violence as it is experienced at the street level and in communities around the country, and this for me is the central story of violence in America.

Let me turn my attention then to looking toward the future and to make some recommendations, if I might, for activities that this Committee might carry out in the coming years.

I have three categories of recommendations: one is for us to develop a much better understanding of the problem of violence in America; the second is to support proven interventions; and the third is to continue to test new ideas.

If you look at other areas of social policy in America, we have, in fact, a very limited ability to track, analyze, and describe the phenomenon of violence. Our Uniform Crime Reports from the FBI are typically released months after the close of the year. The National Crime Victimization Survey, which struggles for appropriations from Congress each year, is a national survey that cannot capture local phenomena. And even the ADAM program that we established under the Clinton administration, which had a goal of looking at offender patterns in 75 cities, has been cut back from the 35 we established to 10 today. So we have a very anemic capability to understand the phenomenon that is of interest to this Committee.

So my first recommendation is that the new Congress work with experts in the field to establish a robust way of understanding and do research on local crime trends, and I have some recommendations in my testimony.

The second recommendation is to support proven interventions, and I am particularly impressed with the work of Professor David Kennedy, who is now at John Jay, on developing what was referred to by the Chairman as the Boston Ceasefire project and referred to also in the Chairman's opening statement by Operation—sorry, the High Point work that Reverend Summey will talk about. Here we have a proven intervention that has shown remarkable success. A couple examples. We do see reducing homicide in Indianapolis by a third; reducing homicide in neighborhoods in Chicago by 37 percent; and the work underway now in Cincinnati reducing homicide associated with those violent groups I alluded to by about half.

So we have every reason to believe that there are some interventions that have proven successful. Work is also now underway in Providence under the leadership of Colonel Esserman. And it is, in my view, the obligation of the Federal Government to help spread those successful strategies to communities that are experiencing high rates of violence. Again, in my testimony I have offered some ways to do that.

The second suggestion—or, rather, the third suggestion here is for the Federal Government, as Dr. Blumstein recommended, to continue to be the research and development arm, the capacity that the Nation needs to test new ideas, evaluate them rigorously, to help communities implement those that are proven to be successful, not to waste taxpayer dollars on frivolous ideas—and there are

far too many of them in our field—or pet projects that sometimes garner attention; rather, to be a serious, scientific enterprise on behalf of the country and to put the best minds of the country, whether in academia or in practice, to work trying to design and develop and test new approaches. If we do that, my expectation is that we can bring the rates of violence significantly lower than they are right now, and we could perhaps even approach those European levels that should be our aspiration.

I thank you for your time and for your invitation.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Travis appears as a submission for the record.]

Senator WHITEHOUSE. [Presiding.] Thank you very much, President Travis.

Chairman Leahy has been called away to make a statement on the floor. As you can imagine, this is an unusually busy time. He will return.

In the meantime, I think since I have already had the opportunity to give an introduction to Colonel Esserman, I will keep it short and simply call on him at this stage to share with us his testimony. Colonel Esserman, welcome.

STATEMENT OF COLONEL DEAN M. ESSERMAN, CHIEF OF POLICE, PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Chief ESSERMAN. Thank you to the Chairman and to Senator Whitehouse. I wish my wife and children were here. What you said, they would not believe it. Thank you.

[Laughter.]

Chief ESSERMAN. I am grateful for the opportunity to testify before your Committee, and I sit here in front of you today as one of America's police chiefs. I have been the police chief of Providence for 5–1/2 years, our State's capital, the second largest city in New England and, unfortunately, one of the poorer cities in America—in fact, among the five poorest cities for children in America. And for too long we were also a city that saw too much violence, especially violence among our young, among our children; a city where too many children, our children, were being shot, too many were being arrested, and, too many were being buried.

I am proud to say that the men and women of the Providence Police Department who I proudly represent today, known as "Providence's Finest," have started to make a difference, to turn the tide. For more than 5 years, crime has been going down in Providence. Led by an energetic and reform-minded Mayor, David Cicilline, the Providence Police Department has done more than transform its strategies and tactics. The department has undergone an extensive reengineering and has fundamentally changed the way it thinks about itself and its work.

In the past, the department saw itself like many. Police were like armed referees who kept an authoritative distance—to the point of being almost anonymous—while trying to maintain order in a community that was not their own.

In our reengineering efforts, we have adopted the lessons learned over the past two decades in American policing of what works.

First, we have embraced and instituted community policing, decentralizing the department, and dividing the city into neighborhood police districts. Each district has a community-donated neighborhood substation office and a commander accountable to the residents and to me.

Second, the management tool adopted by the department to oversee our newly decentralized operations is weekly detective and command staff meetings driven by timely and accurate crime statistics—often known as the "New York City Compstat Model." Accountability is emphasized by detective and patrol supervisors gathering weekly to review incidents, events, coordinate activities, and share critical information. Moreover, the department has embraced the important principles embodied in Professor Kelling's work, well known as "Broken Windows." We focus our resources on serious violent crimes and neighborhood quality-of-life offenses with equal efforts.

We take great pride in Providence in studying, when necessary modifying, and implementing the best practices from across our Nation. Let me outline a few of our partnerships and problem-solving strategies that we believe have made the difference.

The department formed a gun task force that specializes in conducting both short- and long-term investigations into illegal firearms possession, use, and trafficking. The gun task force works closely with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. For every gun arrest in Providence, a Providence Police detective and an ATF agent together interview the suspect. The department also partnered on a Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative with the United States Attorney's Office and our Rhode Island Attorney General's office focusing on the coordination and Federal prosecution of all eligible gun cases.

The department partnered with the Rhode Island Local Initiative Support Corporation, known as LISC, to transform distressed neighborhoods into vibrant and healthy places. We work with our local community development corporations encouraging homeownership and providing capital investment for real estate projects.

The Department partnered with the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence. Pursuing an initiative first born in Boston in the 1990s, as the Chairman referred to, institute staff known as "street workers" are certified nonviolence trainers and veterans of life on the street—often former gang members, who teach the principles of nonviolence developed by Dr. Martin Luther King. Street workers intervene in potentially violent situations, offering mediation and conflict resolution services, and put themselves on the line in the neighborhoods every night.

The department partnered with Family Service of Rhode Island, which is the oldest and largest nonprofit human service agency in Rhode Island, to replicate and enhance the Child Development-Community Policing Program of Police and Mental Health Clinicians, first pioneered by the Yale Child Study Center and the New Haven, Connecticut Police Department in 1992. Every night social service clinicians ride with officers patrolling the streets of Providence and provide counseling and support services to those in immediate need.

The department partnered with the State Department of Probation and Parole, where these officers are now assigned to my neighborhood substations. Their caseload is specific to the police districts and their geography. They share information about returning inmates and hold meet-and-greet orientation meetings in the neighborhood every month.

And finally, in 2006, the National and Rhode Island Urban Leagues approached the department about working together to implement a Drug Market Intervention Initiative in the Lockwood Plaza neighborhood of Providence. The Drug Market Intervention Initiative is based on the initial work of John Jay Professor David Kennedy, as mentioned by President Travis, which we unabashedly copied and which my colleague from High Point, North Carolina will speak about in a moment. The success achieved in Lochwood can be attributed to the department's strong community partnerships and its ability to change its thought process, strategy, and structure.

Many of the initiatives that I have outlined today, and others that time does not permit, were born from federally sponsored research and started with Federal grant funds from the National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and, specifically, Project Safe Neighborhoods and Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant funds, which have recently been eliminated or dramatically reduced in the last Federal budget. I ask you today to restore these needed funds. They make a difference.

In closing, I sit here today speaking for my community and my children, nearly 26,000 of them in Providence. I believe that any American police chief worth his salt would tell you that the best way to fight crime is to invest in our children and to protect our children, their families, and their neighborhoods. Too many of our children in our inner cities are poor and are frightened of the violence around them. They have come to know the face of violence all too intimately, all too personally. These are our children. They are American children. I believe our Nation must not just protect our children at the borders from the threat of foreign attacks, but also protect our children from the violence within the communities where we live.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Chief Esserman appears as a submission for the record.]

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Colonel Esserman.

Our next witness is Reverend James Summey, who has been the pastor of the English Road Baptist Church in High Point, North Carolina, since 1992. Reverend Summey has been an active community leader in High Point and a leading proponent of the community-based policing strategies that resulted in the elimination of a decades-old drug market that had long blighted his neighborhood. In 1999, Reverend Summey, along with several other local pastors, created West End Ministries, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization that provided a forum for community members to voice their concerns and suggestions for their neighborhood. Reverend Summey's efforts were critical to the development of the strategies and approaches that led to a dramatic reduction in violence and drug activity in High Point.

Reverend Summey, welcome.

STATEMENT OF REVEREND JAMES SUMMEY, ENGLISH ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA

Reverend SUMMEY. Thank you, Senator. When I came to High Point in 1992, coming to the West End community, I had some background information about this semi-infamous part of High Point. But it really was not until I got there that I realized the magnitude of the violence as well as just every sort of way that a neighborhood could be oppressed by a social condition that was existing in this very concentrated part of town of approximately 1,400 people.

It was rather frustrating, to be quite honest, in regard to trying to even minister and work within the context socially of the area. The churches of the area were rather feeling oppressed as well.

Making much of a long story a bit shorter for those who are listening today, it is very important to understand that the type of violence that we were seeing was very much related to the drug market that was going on. Every sort of vice that you could think of was happening right in front of the community's residents, and the residents, as I have already stated, felt so oppressed that they were really not free to move about. The sense of community and neighborhood was basically vanquished because of the existing condition of the community.

Efforts to go into the community and talk with people sometimes led to even greater suspicion because they were afraid to talk about their neighbor or what was going on. It was not until some of the pastors, as Senator Whitehouse just mentioned, got together and we started addressing in our conversations the situation at hand. We formed a committee of people to talk to. From that we engaged the city of High Point with their Community Development Department. With that we hosted a first meeting in the West End where 117 people bravely came out after we went door to door and begged them to come and voice their concerns about the community. In so doing, we came up with three essentials of that community: Number one, the crime, the violence; number two, the condition of young people, youth walking the streets, no place to go, children under age, no parental guidance, and parents that were working late, and no one to look after the children after school; and, number three, just generally the community appearance of the West End.

So we went to work on all of those areas. I will focus on the one that I was involved in with the crime.

Getting feedback from the residents and finally working with the police more and more about how they went about doing their jobs was very comforting in a community conversation. However, the traditional ways of policing, the sweeps, the stings, whether it be about drugs or prostitution, or whatever, the shots still rang out. They could sweep the streets clean for a week or two, but only for it to startup again. The traditional methods that had been tried, and not so true maybe always, that had been going on for, you know, a couple of decades were not really working.

It was not until 2004, January or February 2004, when I was introduced to David Kennedy, when he came to High Point and introduced this particular drug market intervention approach. The first

time I heard it, I thought it made complete sense, and that is not a promotion or anything. It really did, mainly because a community can embrace it, because it is absolutely fair. It involves the community actually taking on their situation where the perpetrators of violence are actually given a chance to turn their life around because the community, for the first time, is able to confront them and say, "You know, we do not approve of what you are doing. We are tired of living scared, and we want you to stop it. And if you cannot stop it, then we are supporting the police to prosecute you and to do all that they can to stop what you are doing. However, if you are willing to turn your lives around, we will do all that we can to assist you, walk with you, stand with you as you make this turnabout to reclaim a life that is positive."

So working together with many resources within the city of High Point, particularly an organization known as the High Point Community Against Violence, resources that we garnered together, working with, of course, our district attorney, the Middle District of North Carolina U.S. Attorney's Office, and, of course, the High Point Police Department, with an incredible partnership of community folks, as well as the police and prosecutors working together, we confronted these individuals from the West End community on May 18, 2004. And I can tell you, since May 18, 2004, it has been nearly night and day difference.

The 10 years before May 18, 2004, the West End led the community of High Point in homicides and all sorts of gun and physical violence. Since May 18, 2004, we have not had one homicide, nearly no incidents of gun crime, because we have actually confronted the perpetrators of the violence, we have worked with them, continued to maintain what we said we would do by honesty and truthfulness. Community relations are at an all-time high. Social relations, race relations have all been improved because of this. Children now can walk the streets. They can walk to church. They can walk to school. They can go down to the local store, get a soda pop. It is a night and day incredible difference, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to share this with you.

One thing I can say—and, Senator Whitehouse, you said it very well in your remarks earlier—is that, you know, I am not so sure this is the answer, but it is a major answer, and it should be implemented. I am very grateful to the Bureau of Justice Assistance for how they have been able to take this all around the country to introduce it to quadrants of the United States, to police and prosecutors over the past year and a half. And they have done a tremendous job of getting the word out about this particular method.

But I would love to see the Senate and, of course, the Congress, all the factors of Government, to incorporate this method, support it, and allow this to be an option to all of the prosecutors and police chiefs of America and to back it up with your seals of approval because you guys have researched it very well. And to go ahead and reflect on what you said, this is certainly an answer to hometown security, Senator, and I agree 100 percent with what you said on that.

So this is something that really works. I am on the ground with it. I know the before and the after, and I support it wholeheartedly, and I am so grateful for the High Point Police Department having

the courage as well as the diligence to see this through. It has now revolutionized four different distinct areas of High Point, North Carolina, and all these residents in these four distinct areas are likewise enjoying some of the new senses of freedom that this particular method has brought.

Thank you for listening to me.

[The prepared statement of Reverend Summey appears as a submission for the record.]

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Reverend Summey. It sounds like it took some courage on the part of the community.

Reverend SUMMEY. Absolutely.

Chairman LEAHY. As well as on the part of the police department, and it is really a very, very impressive story. It makes me think that when you look at crime fighting in our media, on television and the movies, you always see the same old paradigm reenacted, and it is law enforcement rushing to a crime after the fact. It is laying down the chalk lines. It is trying to figure out who did it, prosecuting them, and throwing them in jail—which is fine and necessary. But a story like you have told I think is equally capable of stirring the public because of that sense of community courage, and I hope that the media begins to see entertainment opportunities in stories like yours and not just in the stories that they focus on in the law enforcement context.

Our next witness is Dr. George Kelling, a professor at the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University and a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute. Professor Kelling is a leading scholar in criminal justice policy and helped develop the Broken Windows policy implemented in New York City in the 1980s and 1990s. Professor Kelling has previously acted as research fellow and executive director of the Criminal Justice Policy and Management Program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Professor Kelling began his career as a child care counselor and probation officer in Minnesota.

Welcome, Professor Kelling.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE L. KELLING, PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, RUTGERS NEWARK UNIVERSITY, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

Mr. KELLING. Thank you, and thank you for the opportunity to meet with you. Please understand my somewhat casual attire. I was invited to testify as I was on my way to a bicycling trip in my home State of Wisconsin and did not have a chance to return to my New Hampshire home for more appropriate clothing.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. You look fine.

[Laughter.]

Mr. KELLING. Nonetheless, during the last 5 years, I have worked on the ground in six cities: Newark, Los Angeles, Denver, Boston, Milwaukee, and Allentown. In Newark, homicide is down in comparison to 2007 by 40 percent; in Los Angeles, 9 percent—a 2-year decline of 23 percent; Milwaukee, 30 percent; Boston, 13 percent; and Denver, 22 percent. Allentown's homicide rate has held steady, but our efforts have just begun there. In these cities I have worked with political and community leaders, citizens in neighborhoods, public and private agencies, and police officials

ranging from chiefs to line police officers. Two common threads run through my experiences in each of these cities: first, the need for leadership; and, second, a shift in approach on the part of all concerned from reacting to crime after it happens to "stopping the next crime."

The sources of leadership in addressing crime problems vary from community to community: In some locations it is political; in others, police; in others, both; in yet others, a mix of private and public agencies. These leaders understood that the reactive model of crime control had failed miserably and that they had to take political and organizational risks to field effective violence prevention.

In the following, I will describe briefly what I consider to be the basic methods of crime prevention. Second, I will revisit the experience of New York City, a city enjoying crime declines that arguably are unparalleled in history and from which I believe there is much to learn. There is much I will not discuss that relates to crime prevention and reduction: the need for social, spiritual, recreational, and educational services; employment; family assistance and support; and others. My focus instead will be on five proximate measures that most communities could move to immediately. None are very "sexy" or even new, but conceiving, implementing, and sustaining the programmatic forms they take can be complicated, depending on the agency, its resources, and the shape of the problems.

One, increase the "felt" presence of capable guardians. Starting with police but moving on to prosecution, probation, and parole, other governmental agencies, and even the courts, we must increase the real presence of each in neighborhoods. For police this means getting out of their cars, walking, riding bicycles, meeting with citizens, and in other ways becoming an active neighborhood presence. In prosecution, it would mean having community prosecutors meet regularly with citizens in neighborhoods to understand their problems and devise solutions. I could give examples for other disciplines as well.

Two, persuade people, especially the young, to behave. Law enforcement agencies and others involved in crime reduction efforts need to think beyond formal measures. Among the most fundamental and successful tactics is persuasion. We have heard about that from Reverend Summey alongside of us. Persuading people can range from simply "talking to them" to complicated programs that link active law enforcement with persuasive ways of communicating with young people on the verge of serious trouble. Both John Jay College Professor David Kennedy and University of Illinois Chicago Campus Professor Gary Slutkin have developed model programs to persuade people, especially violence-prone youths, to back off. Kennedy focuses on persuasive efforts by law enforcement officials themselves while Slutkin's program uses reformed young people, especially reformed gang members.

Three, restore order. I am, of course, referring here to an idea that I helped develop: "Broken Windows." Put simply, Broken Windows argues that for a community to be safe and prosperous, minimal levels of order must be established and maintained. It is no secret that Broken Windows has come under considerable academic criticism. Certainly, a Broken Windows approach—that is, aggres-

sive "paying attention" to minor offenses and disorderly behavior—can be done inappropriately. Yet every city in which I have worked that has achieved substantial crime reduction has also paid careful attention to maintaining order—and with considerable success.

Four, solve problems. Until recently, police and other criminal justice agencies have treated violent acts as independent incidents rather than symptoms of problems with both history and future. Right now the effects on communities have been disastrous. While we certainly want police and other agencies, especially prosecutors, to be concerned about individual cases and offenders, they need to be equally concerned about the community problems that such cases represent and create.

Five, when formal measures are appropriate, enforce the law swiftly and fairly. I will not say much about this here. Let me summarize, however, by noting that a small population of offenders is busily nominating itself for incarceration by repeatedly committing both minor and serious offenses. For this group, we should have no reluctance to imprison them for extended periods of time. Unfortunately, however, there are at least two problems: first, in the absence of other preventive measures, incarceration has been overused; and, second, law enforcement has been applied so capriciously that it often fails to serve as a deterrent or to persuade the "wannabees" and other youths at the edge.

The primary question facing us now is: Once we have initially reduced violence in a neighborhood, how do we sustain those gains? I think that close examination of what happened in New York will help us answer this question. Let me summarize what I believe really happened in New York City. I will skip forward to a very brief summary statement that is explained in more detail in the document that I have submitted.

I would explain both the steepness and persistence of the crime decline in New York City as resulting from the fervent pursuit by a critical mass of public and private agencies operating out of a congruent understanding of the nature of the problems and their solutions. Their self-interests included economic, neighborhood safety, the ability to provide services, and others. When joined by the NYPD, with its common understanding and its additional and unique capacities, the critical mass reached a tipping point.

Summarizing, we now have a lot of knowledge about ways to prevent crime that, if assiduously applied, reduce violence. For violence reduction to be sustained, however, a common theory of action must activate a critical mass of community agencies and resources. Without such a common theory of action, cities and communities will pick away here and there at the edges, never really reaching the tipping point that New York City has.

Two final comments. Both have to do with the fact that the war on terror and related assumptions that terror and common crimes are essentially different problems have resulted in the virtual gutting of the National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the Community Oriented Policing Services, all in the name of terror prevention. These assumptions are not only faulty, they have been a disaster for localities. In fact, terrorists commit common crimes on their way toward terrorist acts and, in doing so, are vulnerable to action by local police.

Second, ongoing support for local law enforcement efforts is crucial to their future success. Their accomplishments in reducing crime during the last 10 to 12 years is a direct result of the research conducted during the last 40 years. This is not just a pitch for resources for research and other types of support from an academic. Every chief with whom I have worked over the past years would make the same claim. If we are to maintain, and improve on, our gains of the recent past, the Federal Government must view ongoing crime control research and support as equally essential to that needed for dental or medical problems. Both crime problems and terrorism in many senses are local problems and must be resolved locally. Locals, however, are in need of support.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kelling appears as a submission for the record.]

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Dr. Kelling.

As I hear the testimony of all five of you, who are extraordinarily talented and committed individuals, it all makes perfect sense. But I also have a little sense of sort of deja-vu. I was the U.S. Attorney in Rhode Island from 1994 to 1998. David Kennedy worked with us in Rhode Island on crime prevention techniques. I then became the Attorney General. I opened community prosecutor offices. Throughout that period, we had the implementation of the COPS program and the advent of community policing theory. And here we are 8, 10, 12 years later, depending on which point you pick, and we are still having this discussion.

My question to you is: When we seem to know this and when we seem to have known it for some time, what is it that is discouraging widespread adoption of these techniques by police chiefs and communities across the country? The payoff in terms of reduced crime, safer neighborhoods, improved property values, better sense of community and quality of life seems to be enough to provide a positive motivation to get there, and that suggests to me that there are some real institutional obstacles to these ideas that are now a decade old penetrating adequately and having their effect. What is your advice on that subject? Mr. Travis.

Mr. TRAVIS. I will start. I think each of the witnesses today has commented on the absence of Federal leadership, the decline in Federal financial support, the need for more research, the need for more assistance to be provided to local communities.

It is true—and I certainly agree with your opening statement—that we know a lot more than we have known historically about what to do, and this is a time when, in addition to doing research on new interventions, when there is a crying need, in my view, to take proven interventions and replicate them nationally. David Kennedy, whom you mentioned, is just overwhelmed with interest from jurisdictions around the country to provide some form of assistance or consultation.

So, at a minimum, that is what is needed, is to take interventions that have been successful and the Federal role, in my view, should be to help jurisdictions with some attention to the integrity of the introduction of those interventions, to work with those jurisdictions to take proven strategies.

But the second point here is that this is much more than testing and implementing new ideas, and let me echo something that Professor Kelling said. What is needed here is to develop a culture of professionalism within the policing community so that this attention could be sustained over years. There are a number of communities that have tried this or tried that, it has been successful for a while, but it is not often that you have the type of sustained reduction in crime that we have seen in New York, that Colonel Esserman referred to, and that Reverend Summey referred to. That requires sustained managerial attention over time.

So that is not a question of whether the intervention works or not. That is a question of whether there is political leadership and the ability, particularly within the police department, to sustain a regimen of professionalism and accountability.

So we tend to move from new idea to new idea in our field too much, and there are a lot of—there has been a lot of research over the years, and now is the time to start, in my view, with providing Federal leadership and Federal resources to implementing proven interventions.

Chief ESSERMAN. I would echo the President. We did not stay the course. My wife says that my greatest and only strength is that I am boring and that I think about the same thing every day—which is crime.

We got a lot of things right, and we did not stay the course. And I look at it through the eyes of an American police chief and a patriot who loves my Nation and is proud to be here today. But this giant of a Nation that I love and that I think we all love really does strike me to be a cyclops with but one eye. And when we pivot as a giant of a Nation to look at another problem, we forget what we were looking at. And we pivoted, and we just did not stay the course.

And it is remarkable to me that, as I watch the nightly news, as I did when I was a child at my parents' legs watching it during the Vietnam War, and when I hear the body counts of our American soldiers, some of them police officers who are now serving in the national uniform overseas, and I hear about that body count, I do not hear about the American body count in the country. The American body count in our country is now approaching 50 murders every day. Sometimes that visits Providence or Boston or New York or High Point. But we are becoming a country with a murder rate that I find unacceptable. And this giant of a Nation knew what to do and started to do it. And I just think we did not stay the course.

I think the communities of the Nation need help from Washington to stay focused and to stay the course.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Dr. Blumstein?

Mr. BLUMSTEIN. I think part of the issue you raise is very much one of inertia, that cities are doing what they have always done One of the important roles of getting external interventions—we have seen some excellent police chiefs. Dean Esserman's story was an excellent example of that, where innovative individuals, savvy individuals came in and brought new ideas and brought new approaches. But most places are merely continuing what they have been doing regardless.

One of the important roles of Federal opportunities and interventions is that it provides the opportunity for innovation. It provides an opportunity for transfer of knowledge, coming into places that have just been doing the same thing. So that the notion of technical assistance, the notion of bringing innovative approaches that have been used in some places into new places is really an important opportunity. And the stimulus for that comes from the Federal funding for the new opportunities. It serves to introduce these places to innovation and recognition, and that makes the Federal Government an important stimulus for all of that to happen.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Another area that I am interested in that I think, Dr. Kelling, you are—

Mr. KELLING. I wonder if I could address the last issue.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Sure.

Mr. KELLING. Right now I am working closely with Chief Ed Flynn in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. One of the biggest problems he faces there is the 911 system, and that is, the rapid response to calls for service.

All the evidence demonstrates that 911 systems are enormously expensive, are very low payoff, and have led to the de-policing of city streets; that is, police have to be in their cars waiting for the next call for service; that is, "in service" means riding around.

He is systematically attempting to decrease the amount of emphasis on rapidly responding to calls for service. He does so at great risk. There is a conventional wisdom that 911 is the great protector of citizens when the research demonstrates that it is not. Somehow what we have to find are ways to take on the conventional wisdom about what works and what does not work, and then give the police the flexibility to try things.

The trouble is the special efforts, which really are built on the research and the work that we have talked about today, are always special efforts rather than the core competence of a police department. Because if you go to virtually any city in the United States, riding around in cars and rapidly responding to calls for service is what police business is about. And yet we know it has virtually no—very little payoff. And we squander police resources catering to the conventional wisdom.

That is why I talked about the idea of leaders taking great political and organizational leadership, because if something goes drastically wrong in a call that was delayed deliberately by police policy, Chief Flynn is going to be having to face very critical press and a lot of political resistance.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. The second question that I wanted to ask had to do with an observation that I could not help but note repeatedly during my years in law enforcement, and that is, we deploy vast resources on incarcerating people who are dangerous people and very often deserve to be incarcerated. I do not begrudge those resources. We also devote vast resources patrolling the general community and supporting the 911 system and being out there among the general population. But it strikes me that the highest-risk area is when you have those dangerous people from the incarceration system reemerging, reentering the general population. And in that area where they are coming out and overlapping, I think as you all know, that is a high-priority area if you just think

of it in those terms. And yet the additional resources that we spend in that area are really negligible. We have struggled for years in Rhode Island to increase the probation presence. One of Chief Esserman's initiatives has been to collocate probation folks and his community police officers. But that is being done still in a context in which the reentry of folks from incarcerative environments back into the general population is still an area that gets very little attention and very little funding. Probation is probably the thinnest spread area of law enforcement, far more than police and 911 coverage. And yet there is where the danger is.

As we have shown in Providence, in work that started even before Chief Esserman, the focus of those folks is in fairly specific areas. They just bombard, when they are released, a very few neighborhoods and zip codes, and it creates an enormous social problem for that often distressed existing neighborhood now to have to cope with this additional problem that is highly disproportionate to more affluent neighborhoods and, therefore, often overlooked.

Do you agree that that is a problem? And if so, what do you see to be the best ways to focus on the reentry problem? President Travis.

Mr. TRAVIS. I will start off on that. This is a topic I have given a fair amount of thought to over the years, and we are aware, as the Chairman indicated in his opening statement, that we now have very high incarceration rates in America. Over the past 30 years, we have nearly quintupled the per capita incarceration rate in our country and now have the distinction of having the highest incarceration rate in the world.

Putting aside for a moment a debate about whether that is a wise investment of resources or not—and I think we have far too many people in prison—we also have this reality that we have neglected at our peril, which is that, except for people who die in prison, everybody we put in prison comes home at some point. We do not have exile in our country. And so we now have 700,000 people coming out of our State and Federal prisons each year. It used to be 150,000 20 years ago. We have 9 to 12 million people, depending on how you count them, coming out of our jails each year. And these individuals—and 90 percent of them men—are returning to a very small number of communities, and these are the same communities that we addressed before and I highlighted in my testimony that are also facing the burden of violent crime.

There is an association, there is a connection between the phenomenon of reentry and violence in communities. Certainly it is felt by those communities that large numbers of their men are arrested, sent away for, on average now, close to 3 years, and return home disoriented, not ready to engage in work, often returning to habits that involved antisocial behavior and drug use and the like. And you are absolutely right, Senator, that the moment of release, the time when they come out of incarceration, according to the BJS data, presents the highest risk in terms of their returning to criminal behavior. And we do not assign our resources where that risk exists.

So we have more people coming out of prison to a small number of neighborhoods. We have not increased the resources for the Gov-

ernment agencies that are supposed to be responsible for their safe return home, and they are returning home to highly violent communities and often reengaging in violence to settle scores or whatever.

So part of a national antiviolence strategy, in my view, has to focus on this phenomenon, unprecedented in our history, of large numbers of men coming out of prison. And we have to start before they are released. We have to start while they are still in prison. Senator Specter talked about the need for programs and the like. We have also reduced our investment in drug treatment and education and the like.

But the critical moment is exactly the moment that you highlighted, which is that moment when they leave the incarcerated status and return home, and that is the moment where we literally lose people.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Dr. Blumstein?

Mr. BLUMSTEIN. Let me say something about addiction. The 1980s and 1990s was a period when we saw lots of addiction to drugs. Part of my concern is the degree to which our legislative bodies became addicted to being punitive. It worked very well in terms of the public's concern about crime, the public's concern about drugs, and the public would cheer as they saw more and more punitive legislation coming through. That gave rise to this major growth of incarceration, particularly of drug offenders, which are now the single largest crime type in prison.

As I tried to indicate in my testimony, that does not necessarily stop any transactions because, as long as the demand is there, you are going to get replacements. And it turned out that the replacements were far more threatening than the people they replaced.

So we have got all of these people in prison coming out, and the prison experience could be rehabilitative, but it could also be criminogenic. In part, they have greater trouble getting jobs when they come out, and we all agree that their prior criminal record eventually becomes stale information. But no one has developed yet the idea of when it is sufficiently stale, and that is where some of my research is targeted.

As Jeremy Travis pointed out, getting them before they leave and as soon as they get back into the community is absolutely critical, and making sure we make major investments in getting them back functioning as legitimate members of the society. But we also ought to deal with the addiction of the legislative bodies to start rethinking some of the legislation that is now encased in statute that is now ready to be rethought. The circumstances are now quite a bit different from what than they were when the public was clamoring for more punitiveness.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEAHY. [Presiding.] Thank you.

As you know, Doctor, we finally passed the Second Chance Act facing filibusters and everything else, which will give us a start on that. But it is also like we will send billions and billions of dollars to countries with the intent to stop their cocaine coming here and close a blind eye to any human rights violations in those countries and saying we are fighting a war on drugs. With the billions upon billions dollars we spent to do that, the price of cocaine has not

come down on the street; the availability has not come down on the street. And we have not done anywhere near enough to stop the demand. We can stop any one country's source—let's assume we could—of cocaine and heroin, but if you do not stop the demand in the most affluent Nation on Earth, you are not going to stop—another country will take over.

When we go from more of the macro into the micro, in reading some of the material for this, Reverend Summey, I was—am I pronouncing that correctly? Is it "Sum-me" or "Soo-me"?

Reverend SUMMEY. "Sum-me."

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you. You should hear all the pronunciations of my name, especially if you travel in Ireland where it goes from "Laff-ay," "La-hay," to "Lee-hee" and what not. But I think about High Point, North Carolina, a community-based—could you kind of give just a thumbnail? What was it like just a few years ago in the neighborhood around your church where your parishioners had to go? And what is it like today? And if you had to pick the two or three things that helped the most, what were they?

Reverend SUMMEY. The empowerment of the community to know that they have a right to say that we do not want our community to be this way that was provided by a voice. You know, the church is doing some leadership, but mainly working with the city and us coming together and having a forum where people could talk. And they were really heard, and then a plan came up, as we have described, with David Kennedy's plans. And when they realized that they could actually confront the actual people that were pinpointed that were the perpetrators of violence and the drug markets, and they realized that that could make a difference in their own lives, that they could finally get it out; second, that the criminal forces of the community had been going along thinking that because no one said something, it was approval. When they realized there was no approval there, it absolutely stymied them. And that was a great deterrent already for the community to say, "Stop it," because they were reading their passivity as approval.

The result of that, of course, was the lack of violence. The drug market on the corners and the crack houses literally shut down overnight, and that is not an exaggeration. There was none. It stopped, and as well as the other, you know, subsidiary vices—prostitution—just plummeted after that because there was not that combination of driving the area looking for crack cocaine, looking for girls or whatever.

And so the community, when they saw the streets settle down and they did not have to worry about the intimidation factors and the fear factors, that power of being able to express right and wrong just absolutely liberated the community.

Chairman LEAHY. By intimidation, give me an example. Say you are parents with a couple young kids in that area. What kind of intimidation were they facing?

Reverend SUMMEY. Well, for one thing, the street corners and sidewalks are pretty well taken over by the drug dealers and the prostitutes, and the parents did not want to let the kids out. They did not want to them walking down the street or riding their bicycle. Plus, I literally saw and experienced some of it from the drug dealers, that they would literally say something to you, "What are

you looking at? Why are you hanging around here?" When doing some of the things I did as a minister in the community, I had personal threats made against me for even talking to some of the drug dealers and asking them to not be doing this. And the parents of the kids as well as some of the older residents of the city just felt fearful, and they stayed in their homes.

Chairman LEAHY. That is amazing. Growing up in a small town in Vermont, as I did, and as my kids did, you hop on your bicycle, go on down and visit your friends, go play baseball in the 3 weeks of summer that we have in Vermont. I will probably catch heck from the Chamber of Commerce on that. But you know what I am saying, just being able to go visit friends and do normal kids' things.

Reverend SUMMEY. That did not happen, sir. Right.

Chairman LEAHY. Mr. Travis, this is something that worked in North Carolina. Are there things we can do at the Federal level to help with these kind of community-based initiatives? I know what Senator Specter and I found out when we went to Rutland, Vermont. We could bring them certain things, but we saw our community was basically saying enough is enough. And a mayor who—some were saying, you know, if we talk about this, maybe it will give us a bad image. He said, "We will talk about this, but it is not going to go away." And they finally did it. As Senator Specter said, we had a very large hall. We figured we would fill about a quarter of it. And it was overflowing. They had people out in the hallways. Everybody had a view. I mean, these are from parents, teachers, religious leaders, business leaders, police, ex-addicts. We had everybody.

I do not want to do what Dr. Blumstein has referred to, that somehow we can do a one-size-fits-all, "let's lock them all up" kind of attitude. What do we do? What can we hand you from the Federal level?

Mr. TRAVIS. Well, I agree that it would be a mistake to continue to pursue the "lock them up" attitude. That is not going to get us out of the situation that we now face. But I think there is a real hunger around the country for national leadership here to help communities around the country take proven strategies, such as those that have been referenced in this hearing, and help those jurisdictions figure out what it takes to implement those strategies.

Yes, perhaps over time we could all sort of learn from each other, but this is an area where we stand on the verge, in my view, of a tipping point, where the police executives are ready, community leaders are ready, local elected officials—mayors and the like—are ready to implement some of these proven strategies. And what is required is a sustained effort over a number of years with appropriate Federal resources—and it is not a lot of money—to work with those communities to help them implement proven strategies and bring rates of violence down. It requires a very different way of doing business from what we have done historically. And the police profession over the years that I have observed it and been part of it is now led by some very thoughtful and innovative and, indeed, brave leaders who stand ready. And we have at the local level community leaders like Reverend Summey.

And the national role here is to convene people, to help develop the technical assistance and training packages, to help provide on-the-ground analytical support, to bring the research community into the development and design and testing of these strategies. And it is not hard. If we had in the health arena proven strategies around the country that reduced breast cancer or any form of serious health issue by 40 to 50 to 60 percent, the professions delivering public health would be obligated to start implementing those interventions for their patients. We are at the point where, in my view, we could start to think about crime policy in the same way. But it is not going to happen naturally. It is going to require a Federal role and a different type of a Federal role.

Chairman LEAHY. But it is also going to require—you cannot have an idea and say, "What is my city government doing? What is my Federal Government doing?" I mean, they can put the tools there, but doesn't it kind of involve everybody?

Mr. TRAVIS. It definitely involves everybody. Crime policy is ultimately a State and local matter, and it is ultimately community matter. It requires families and—but there is a Federal role. The Federal role, in addition to the testing of ideas and doing the research—which I also advocate strongly. As the former Director of NIJ, I am here to say it is shameful what has happened to their budget. But here, when we are talking about what to do about violence and the great strides we have made over the past number of years in developing effective strategies, the Federal role is a leadership role in working with those communities to implement those interventions in a systematic way.

Chairman LEAHY. And to at least make seed money available for people who want to do that. I think about Chief Esserman goes to school, reads to children, they see that the police officer is not the bad guy. Walk a beat, get to know people on that. I think that probably makes it very difficult, Chief, for some of the officers in your department saying that they are unwilling to go out and walk a beat or read to kids or spend time with them if the Chief has been doing it.

I think I was an effective prosecutor, and I worry, though, about people who have not been involved in law enforcement and think there are simplistic answers, simply lock them up and throw the key away; this kid committed a crime, throw him in that old jail. There have to be better ways. There have to be ways to reach out to them. There have to be ways to have places for kids to go after school. But there has to be a community involvement, and that is why I asked Reverend Summey the questions I did. There is that old expression, "I have been down so long, it is beginning to look up." But if you have a community that feels they are helpless and cannot do anything and it is always going to be this way, then somebody has got to hit the spark.

We are going to have to wrap up here, but, Dr. Kelling, you wanted to add something in there?

Mr. KELLING. Well, I just wanted to second what Jeremy said but take exception to one word that he used regarding the Federal role, and that is "leadership" because I do not really think the Federal Government can provide leadership.

If one analyzes all the ideas that have influenced and developed policing over the last 30 to 40 years, they have all developed locally. What we need is Federal support for local innovation and allow things to happen locally, because that is where all the excitement is. If you notice—

Chairman LEAHY. The COPS program developed nationally.

Mr. KELLING. It developed nationally, but the techniques that they use, the ideas of community policing, the ideas of pulling a lever, David Kennedy's work, the ideas of Broken Windows, the ideas of problem solving all were developed by local police departments in collaboration with outsiders such as me and Jeremy, et cetera. So that the leadership, you see the leadership in terms of ideas coming locally in practice on the ground.

The Federal role is important along all the lines that Jeremy described, but, again, I think we look for programmatic development on a local level and leadership on a local level.

Chairman LEAHY. Mr. Travis, did you want to respond to that? I am also going to place in the record a statement from Senator Biden and Senator Feingold, who have worked so hard on this.

Go ahead, Mr. Travis.

Mr. TRAVIS. Given that we are in the Senate, I will accept that friendly amendment from my colleague from New Jersey. The leadership that I spoke about from the Federal Government is really to support local activities.

I would be remiss, Mr. Chairman, if I did not take this opportunity as well to commend the Senate for the enactment of the Second Chance Act, which I did provide some—

Chairman LEAHY. It took a lot of work.

Mr. TRAVIS. We were all surprised, both that it took long and then ultimately that it got done. And I know that you are providing leadership on getting funding for the Second Chance Act as well, which will make it a reality. So that is an important type of Federal leadership.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you.

I talked when we started, my nearest neighbor in Vermont is a half a mile away. It is my son and his wife. and their little 5-year-old will call up and say, "I am coming to do a sleepover." And I had to ask, "Well, this is OK with your parents?" "Mommy, Daddy, Grandpa says I can come to a sleepover." Or grandmother, if she is the one that answered. And she takes her teddy bear, and I was showing this to Senator Whitehouse in a picture, she just walks down this dirt road the half-mile herself, teddy bear under her arm. I hear Reverend Summey says there was a time when you would not let them go—not even half a mile. You would not let them go half a block away like that.

Not every part of the country is going to be totally safe, but as a country, we have got to get back to that where our children can do that and our children can think of that and our children can believe that there is going to be a place for them in this country. They are going to face enough challenges as they grow up.

Again, I would strongly suggest—you can have wonderful police officers, but don't put all the burden on the police officers. It is not their responsibility. It is all our responsibility.

And, with that, unless you have something else, Senator Whitehouse, we will stand in recess. We will keep the record open. The reason for that, you get a chance to see what you said, and if you think, "I should have added...," please do. We will keep it open for that.

Thank you all very, very much.

[Whereupon, at 11:42 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[Submissions for the record follow.]

SUBMISSIONS FOR THE RECORD

Statement of Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Chairman Leahy, thank you for calling this important and timely hearing on strategies for combating violent crime and the lessons we can draw from recent experience. You have assembled an impressive panel of witnesses who will assist the development of a crime-fighting strategy that will ensure the safety of our communities in the 21st century.

If experience tells us anything, it is that a there is no single cure that will eliminate violent crime in America or anywhere else for that matter. Not too long ago, however, we began to successfully address violent crime in our nation.

Back in the nineties we faced a terrible crime crisis. In 1994, Congress passed the Biden Crime Bill, and it transformed the federal approach to fighting crime. It expanded the Drug Courts, so that non-violent small-time offenders received treatment and strict monitoring, rather than jail terms. It launched the Violence Against Women Act. And it used a three-part approach to fighting crime that proved an effective response to the crime wave of the 1990s:

- investing in prevention and recidivism programs, such as those championed by Professor Jeremy Travis;
- dedicating Federal support to the types of community-oriented policing tactics that Colonel Dean Esserman has so deftly initiated in Providence, Rhode Island; and
- ensuring that offenders serve tough-but-fair prison sentences.

Crime dropped for eight consecutive years. Violent crime and murder rates dropped more than 30 percent. Thus, if there is one thing we should have learned by now, it is that we need an aggressive and comprehensive approach to fighting crime.

Unfortunately, the current Administration has abandoned this approach and crime, once again, is on the rise. Since 2004, violent crime is up 2.8 percent, murders are up 2.5 percent, and robbery is up 9.9 percent. Many of our cities – Boston, Cincinnati, Houston, Oklahoma City, and Pittsburgh, just to name a few – have seen double digit growth in their murder rates. Last year, there were 17,000 murders in the United States. That is too many for a civil society.

You all know better than anyone that fighting crime takes a strong and steady commitment. We built a solid foundation for fighting crime in the 1990s. Now, we must restore that foundation, which has been steadily eroded and chipped away at for the past eight years, and refine and update it so that we have a comprehensive crime-fighting strategy for the 21st Century. With the help of law enforcement, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Association of Police Organizations, I have begun to develop such a strategy. Among other things, this strategy:

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- Revitalizes the COPS program by authorizing $1.15 billion per year for the next 6 years, adding 50,000 new officers, new technology and equipment for officers, and $200 per year to hire and train community prosecutors.
- Restores the FBI's and DEA's crime fighting capabilities by adding 1,000 FBI agents to focus on violent crime and 500 DEA agents to focus on drug trafficking.
- Protects communities by reducing recidivism by authorizing over $1 billion for re-entry programs under the Second Chance Act.
- Increases enforcement against gangs by amending the federal criminal code to define and expanding prohibitions and penalties against criminal street gangs.
- Ensures that state and local law enforcement and criminal justice officials input felony warrants into the federal database, that all such officials have access to that database, and that the extradition task forces the U.S. Marshal's service operates in conjunction with State and local law enforcement have sufficient resources to extradite violent fugitives to face justice.
- Expands and strengthens the Internet Crimes Against Children task force program to investigate and prosecute those who use 21st century technology to abuse and exploit children.
- Invests in youth prevention and intervention strategies by authorizing federal resources to deter and prevent seriously at-risk youth from joining and remaining in illegal gangs – a total of $849 million over the next four years is authorized for these purposes.
- Establishes State and local law enforcement as a full partner in developing homeland security strategy and ensures that law enforcement has the funding, support, resources, and intelligence sharing necessary to respond to terrorist attacks and major incidents.

Fighting crime takes an unflagging commitment, a strong federal, state and local partnership, and a constant vigilance to ensure an effective response to new forms of criminal activity and evolutions in criminal tradecraft. Hearings like the one the Chairman has called today are an essential part of this process. We must rebuild the strong foundation that brought crime down in the 1990s, refine that approach based on the experience of law enforcement officers and the expertise of criminologists, and update it to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues, with my friends in State and local law enforcement, and with experts like those here today to once again make our communities safe places to raise a family, to send a child to school, to work an honest job, or to run a small business. Together, we can build an effective, comprehensive crime control strategy for the 21st century.

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Testimony of

Alfred Blumstein

H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management

Carnegie Mellon University

before the

Senate Judiciary Committee

Strategies for Combating Violent Crime

September 10, 2008

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Senator Leahy and members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting me to testify at this important hearing. I am honored by the opportunity to appear before you today as you consider the various issues involved in the important question of combating violent crime and more generally how the Federal government can more effectively contribute to crime reduction and justice enhancement in a new Administration.

As background to my own involvement in the issues you are considering, I have engaged in a wide variety of criminological research since my involvement as Director of Science and Technology for the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1966. I have been involved in practical policy matters as a member of the Pennsylvania Sentencing Commission for ten years between 1987 and 1997, and I served for over eleven years from 1979 to 1990 as the chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, the state's criminal justice planning agency, which manages Federal criminal justice funds in Pennsylvania. I have appended a short biographical summary at the end of my brief statement.

In my five minutes, I would like to address very briefly some background on trends in violence in recent years, including some of the important lessons learned, and then go on to discuss how I think the Congress could usefully address important concerns about violence, particularly from a Federal perspective.

Trends in Violent Crimes

I would like to focus on the two most serious and best measured violent crimes, murder and robbery. The attached figure shows their trends from 1970 to 2007. These two crimes have tracked each other rather closely. They reached a peak in about 1980, largely as the 1960 peak birth-cohort of the baby-boom generation started moving out of the high crime ages.

Crack began to be introduced as an important technological innovation in the early 1980s. It made the "pleasures" of cocaine accessible to those who could not afford the minimum available quantity of powder. That stimulated a vigorous competitive market, one in which violence was and still is the normal means of dispute resolution. That led Congress and many state legislatures to

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seek means to address that violence. Unfortunately, their repertoire for doing so was quite limited, and almost totally limited to increasing sentences – either through requiring prison sentences rather than probation or by lengthening the sentences. Those legislative initiatives led to passage of a variety of punitive statutes keeping drug sellers in prison to the point where drug offenses are now the single largest offense type in prison – over 20 percent in state prisons and over 50 percent in Federal prisons. Between 1980 and 2000, we saw a 6-8% annual growth in state and Federal prison populations. That led to almost a quintupling of the nation's incarceration rate from the levels that had prevailed rather stably for the previous 50 years. And those statutes are still on the books despite the passing of the widespread violence that characterized the crack markets. As pointed out in a recent Pew report, fully 1 percent of the U.S population is in prison or jail today. That makes us the world leader in incarceration rate, recently having passed the Russians.

Let me distinguish the effectiveness of incarcerating a pathological rapist compared to incarcerating a drug dealer. Locking up the rapist assuredly incapacitates his rapes by removing him from the community. Locking up the drug dealer stimulates the appearance or recruitment of a replacement as long as the demand prevails, and so those replacements nullify any incapacitative or deterrent effect of that incarceration. The locked- up drug dealers take up space and cost us money, but don't do much about reducing drug transactions.

One of the unfortunate and unintended consequences of the massive incarceration of drug sellers was the recruitment of replacements, primarily young African-American males. That recruitment didn't start until 1985, several years after crack had penetrated the urban scene. Those young sellers had to carry guns to protect themselves against street robbers, and they were far less restrained in the use of their guns than the older sellers they replaced. Also, since young people are tightly networked, their pals in the street who were not even connected to the drug markets started carrying guns, and so we saw an escalating arms race in their neighborhoods. This led to a more than doubling of gun homicides for youth 18-24 and a quintupling of that rate for those under 18.

As a result, between 1985 and 1993 we saw a 25% increase in murder, primarily young African-American males killing other young African-American males. By 1993, when the horrors of crack began to be widely recognized, we saw a major drop in demand by new users, and so the

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young sellers were no longer needed, but the robust economy of the time was readily able to absorb them. By 1993, however, all ages of 20 and under experienced more than a doubling of the murder arrest rate compared to 1985, and that showed itself in a 25% increase in homicides. Interestingly, at the same time there was a 25% reduction in murder arrests for all ages over 30, presumably an incapacitation effect resulting from the growth in their incarceration. This makes it clear that prison can be an important instrument for controlling crime, but that requires that we think more carefully about how best to use it.

Following the peak in 1993, the nation experienced a decline of over 40% in murder and robbery, reaching a level by 2000 that had not been seen since the 1960s. Since 2000 those rates have been impressively flat, with murder rates oscillating between 5.5 and 5.7 per 100,000 and with robbery rates oscillating between 137 and 149, impressively narrow ranges for those two offenses. I should also note that the data for 2007 are still preliminary, waiting for final numbers in the next month or two -- as we almost head into 2008. In contrast to most economic or other social accounting information, our crime data should become available much sooner, even as estimates.

Having noted that the national rates have stayed flat does not mean that that pattern prevailed in all cities. My earlier discussion about demographic trends and about the effects of the rise and fall of crack markets were based largely on widespread national phenomena. In contrast, the more recent trends have been driven much more by the specific situations in individual cities: some have been up, others have been down, some up-and-down, and others down and up. The patterns in the three largest cities, New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, have been interesting because they have generally been steadily declining over this interval. That is probably because their managements are quite skillful and sophisticated, and they also have the resources to throw into a developing situation.

A number of the smaller cities have seen spikes of violence over a one to three year period. Those often result from one of two causes. One might be attributable to a spurt of conflict in drug markets, perhaps with former sellers coming out of prison and seeking to recover their former turf. The second is a phenomenon best described by Elijah Anderson in his *Code of the Street.* He describes urban inner-city areas as composed predominately of decent people but with groups of

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what he calls "street people" who have little skills, little prospects for the future, and extremely sensitive egos such that any act of disrespect generates a compulsion to avenge that act. With the widespread prevalence of guns in those communities, probably left over from the days of the thriving crack markets, the results are much too often lethal. To the extent that these individuals aggregate into small gangs, this can lead to a sequence of retaliatory strikes against members of the opposing gangs. The larger cities have developed a variety of tactics for dealing with these problems before they escalate too far and for too long. That may be through recruiting former offenders who have credibility in these neighborhoods to detect the developing crises, to help mediate the disputes, and to call on police resources for intensive patrol and perhaps to extract the main leadership of these conflicts. In other cities, community-oriented policing could perform a similar function. In other cities, technology has been brought in to provide video surveillance of crisis neighborhoods or acoustic gunshot detectors to pinpoint the location of gunshots to permit rapid police response. An important tactic was developed in Boston in the 1990s when gangs were the major threat of violence. A team of criminal-justice practitioners (e.g., combining police and probation resources to complement each other's rights and restrictions) contacted the individual gangs and made it clear to them that they had the information needed to impose lengthy incarceration if the gang persisted in violent activity, and that seemed to work in Boston.

Some Issues for Congress

It is clear that based on these aspects of recent activity that there is much that could be done to strengthen the ability of the medium-size cities (say 250,000 to 1 million in population) to respond to an outburst of violence. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) could initiate a major program to analyze the approaches that have worked in a variety of places, to carry out an evaluation both to document the innovation in order to facilitate its replication elsewhere and to assess its contribution to a reduction in violence. It could then develop technical assistance teams who could travel to cities experiencing a spurt in violence and help them organize an appropriate response. They would have a toolkit of methods and approaches derived from their evaluation studies and, in conjunction with local knowledge and expertise, choose from that toolkit approaches that would work in that particular city. This agency could also organize a training program for police leadership in such cities. That would inevitably have to involve local political and police leadership from the affected communities to participate with the police in any such training activity.

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The work of the National Institute of Corrections with its technical assistance function for the corrections community provides a reasonable model for this effort to help the police.

Pursuing such proactive approaches makes so much more sense than the typical political response of simply increasing sentences. That certainly works under some circumstances, but also can be seriously counterproductive. Many states that are facing serious budget pressures are very actively rethinking the sentencing policies they adopted over the past 30 years that have imposed serious cost burdens, that has contributed to some degree of crime reduction but not necessarily efficiently, and in some cases have directly contributed to worsening the crime problem as was the case in the late 1980s and early 1990s. More community-based supervision, particularly by exploiting GPS capability for tracking the more serious offenders, can provide valuable relief.

While we are thinking of ways to target resources more efficiently, it is also important to recognize that resources directed at early childhood development in the high risk families or neighborhoods could be far more efficient at reducing crime then an immediate response. The problem, of course, is that those benefits will not accrue for another 10 years or more - on someone else's watch. And those suggestions are not likely to be entertained at a time when crime rates are very high. But this time, when crime rates are quite low, might be an ideal time to initiate such efforts as part of an overall long-term violence reduction strategy.

My suggestion of providing technical assistance to police is an important means of implementing our current and accumulating knowledge of what works in at least some circumstances. But as with any uses and development of improved methods, it is essential that there be a strong and effective research and development program to build that capability for the future. It is distressing to note how minuscule the Federal commitment to building that capability is. The Federal agency responsible for building that knowledge base is NIJ. Its budget is something under $50 million to help fix the entire criminal justice system. Compare that to almost $400 million committed to the National Institute of Dental Research.

In its wisdom, the Congress saw fit to insulate NIJ and BJS from the political environment of the Department of Justice by giving their directors sign-off authority on grants and contracts and

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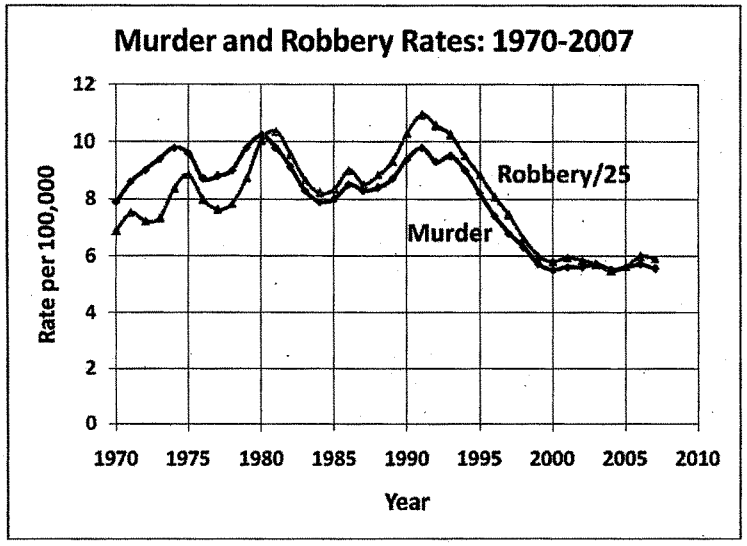
on publications. This independence was necessary to ensure the quality and the integrity as well as the credibility of those two important knowledge-generating agencies. That independence was surreptitiously removed by an obscure clause incorporated in the Patriot Act passed after 9/11. That change has certainly led to diminished performance by NIJ. I would hope that the Congress would give serious attention to rebuilding the statistics, research, and development efforts of these agencies by ensuring their independence and enhancing their budget levels. While providing Federal funds and technical assistance to state and local governments are indeed important, it is hard to identify any role that is a more central Federal responsibility then maintaining a strong statistical system and research and development efforts that serve the nation as a whole. I could provide you with a long list of individual projects that I would like to see supported, but the important message is to re-build the capability that has decayed in recent years.

Thank you very much for your attention. I would be pleased to elaborate for the Committee on any of the issues I have raised here.



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
NEW STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING VIOLENT CRIME: LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECENT EXPERIENCE

WRITTEN TESTIMONY AND EXHIBITS
BY
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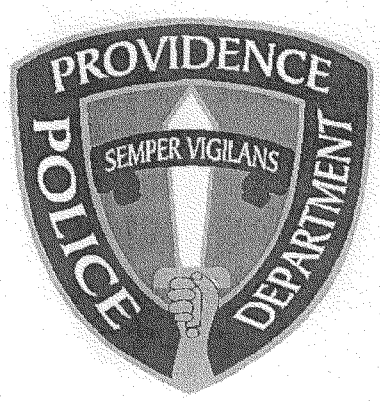

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325 Washington Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

GOOD MORNING MR. CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, MY NAME IS DEAN ESSERMAN AND I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY BEFORE YOUR COMMITTEE. I SIT HERE IN FRONT OF YOU TODAY AS ONE OF AMERICA'S POLICE CHIEFS. I HAVE BEEN THE CHIEF OF POLICE OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE FOR FIVE AND A HALF YEARS. PROVIDENCE IS THE CAPITOL OF RHODE ISLAND AND THE SECOND LARGEST CITY IN NEW ENGLAND. THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE PROPER ENCOMPASSES A VERY HIGH CONCENTRATION OF OUR METROPOLITAN AREA'S RESIDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY; WE ARE IN FACT AMONG THE TOP FIVE POOREST CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES FOR CHILDREN. AND FOR TOO LONG WE WERE ALSO A CITY THAT SAW TO MUCH VIOLENCE, ESPECIALLY VIOLENCE AMONG OUR YOUNG, AMONG OUR CHILDREN. A CITY WHERE TOO MANY CHILDREN, OUR CHILDREN, WERE BEING SHOT, AND TOO MANY BEING BURIED.

I AM VERY PROUD TO SAY THAT THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT WHO I PROUDLY REPRESENT TODAY, "PROVIDENCE'S FINEST" HAVE STARTED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, TO TURN THE TIDE. FOR MORE THAN FIVE YEARS CRIME HAS BEEN GOING DOWN IN PROVIDENCE. LED BY AN ENERGETIC AND REFORM-MINDED MAYOR, DAVID CICILLINE, THE PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS DONE MORE THAN TRANSFORM ITS STRATEGIES AND TACTICS. THE DEPARTMENT HAS UNDERGONE AN EXTENSIVE REENGINEERING AND HAS FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED THE WAY IT THINKS ABOUT ITSELF AND ITS WORK.

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IN THE PAST, THE DEPARTMENT SAW ITSELF LIKE MANY. POLICE WERE LIKE ARMED REFEREES WHO KEPT AN AUTHORITATIVE DISTANCE – TO THE POINT OF BEING ALMOST ANONYMOUS – WHILE TRYING TO MAINTAIN ORDER IN A COMMUNITY THAT WAS NOT THEIR OWN.

I WAS RECRUITED BY THE MAYOR TO CHANGE THAT. I WAS ASKED TO BRING THE COMMUNITY POLICING PHILOSOPHY TO PROVIDENCE. COMMUNITY POLICING MEANS BECOMING ENMESHED IN THE COMMUNITY. OUR IMPROVEMENT AS A POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS DIRECTLY COINCIDED WITH OUR ABILITY TO MAKE THAT TRANSFORMATION. WE ARE AS PROFESSIONAL AS ANY POLICE DEPARTMENT IN THE COUNTRY, BUT WE REJECT THE IDEA OF BEING ANONYMOUS REFEREES. WE ARE PART OF THE COMMUNITY.

IN OUR REENGINEERING EFFORTS, WE HAVE ADOPTED THE LESSONS LEARNED OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES IN AMERICAN POLICING OF WHAT WORKS. FIRST, WE HAVE EMBRACED AND INSTITUTED COMMUNITY POLICING, DECENTRALIZING THE DEPARTMENT, AND DIVIDING THE CITY INTO NEIGHBORHOOD POLICE DISTRICTS. EACH DISTRICT HAS A COMMUNITY DONATED NEIGHBORHOOD SUBSTATION OFFICE AND A COMMANDER ACCOUNTABLE TO THE RESIDENTS AND TO THE DEPARTMENT.

SECOND, THE MANAGEMENT TOOL ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO OVERSEE OUR NEWLY DECENTRAILIZED OPERATIONS IS WEEKLY

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DETECTIVE AND COMMAND STAFF MEETINGS DRIVEN BY TIMELY AND ACCURATE CRIME STATISTICS (OFTEN KNOWN AS THE NEW YORK CITY COMPSTAT MODEL). ACCOUNTABILITY IS EMPHASIZED BY DETECTIVE AND PATROL SUPERVISORS GATHERING WEEKLY TO REVIEW INCIDENTS, EVENTS, COORDINATE ACTIVITIES, AND SHARE CRITICAL INFORMATION. MOREOVER, THE DEPARTMENT HAS EMBRACED THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES EMBODIED IN PROFESSOR KELLING'S WORK, WELL KNOWN AS "BROKEN WINDOWS." WE FOCUS OUR RESOURCES ON SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIMES AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE OFFENSES WITH EQUAL EFFORTS.

IMPORTANTLY, THE DEPARTMENT HAS RELIED ON THE THREE FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNITY POLICING; PARTNERSHIP, PREVENTION, AND PROBLEM SOLVING TO IMPLEMENT ITS CRIME-FIGHTING STRATEGIES. EACH STRATEGY RELATES BACK TO THE DEPARTMENT'S CORE MISSION TO REDUCE CRIME, REDUCE FEAR AND DISORDER, AND ENHANCE HOMELAND SECURITY AWARENESS THROUGHOUT THE CITY. THE RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES. OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS CRIME IS DOWN 30% AND HOMICIDES HAVE BEEN CUT NEARLY IN HALF. THIS REPRESENTS THE LOWEST LEVEL IN THIRTY YEARS. AS IMPORTANTLY, THERE IS A STRONG AND GROWING SENSE OF TRUST AND PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. WHEN WE FORM COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, WE ARE NOT JUST MEETING, WE ARE NOT JUST VISITING, WE ARE STAYING.

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THE PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT TAKES GREAT PRIDE IN STUDYING, MODIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BEST PRACTICES FROM ACROSS OUR NATION. LET ME OUTLINE A FEW OF OUR PARTNERSHIP AND PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES:

- THE DEPARTMENT FORMED A GUN TASK FORCE THAT SPECIALIZES IN CONDUCTING BOTH SHORT AND LONG-TERM INVESTIGATIONS INTO ILLEGAL FIREARMS POSSESSION, USE AND TRAFFICKING. THE GUN TASK FORCE WORKS CLOSELY WITH THE BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS, AND EXPLOSIVES. FOR EVERY GUN ARREST IN PROVIDENCE, AN ATF AGENT AND A PROVIDENCE POLICE DETECTIVE INTERVIEW THE SUSPECT. THE DEPARTMENT ALSO PARTNERED ON A PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE WITH THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND THE RHODE ISLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE FOCUSING ON THE COORDINATION AND FEDERAL PROSECUTION OF ALL ELIGIBLE GUN CASES. THE FEDERAL ADOPTION OF CASES COUPLED WITH LONG PRISON SENTENCES IN FEDERAL PRISONS SENDS A STRONG MESSAGE THAT GUN CRIMES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN PROVIDENCE.
- THE DEPARTMENT PARTNERED WITH THE RHODE ISLAND LOCAL INITIATIVE SUPPORT CORPORATION (LISC) TO TRANSFORM DISTRESSED NEIGHBORHOODS INTO VIBRANT AND HEALTHY PLACES. WE WORK WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS ENCOURAGING HOME OWNERSHIP AND PROVIDING

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CAPITAL INVESTMENT FOR REAL ESTATE PROJECTS. THE PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT WORKS CLOSELY WITH THE LISC SPONSORED COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF PERSISTENT CRIME, DISORDER, AND FEAR. THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED THREE METLIFE FOUNDATION COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARDS OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS.

- THE DEPARTMENT PARTNERED WITH THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF NONVIOLENCE. PURSUING AN INITIATIVE FIRST BORN IN BOSTON IN THE 1990s, INSTITUTE STAFF KNOWN AS STREET WORKERS ARE CERTIFIED NONVIOLENCE TRAINERS AND VETERANS OF LIFE ON THE STREET – OFTEN FORMER GANG MEMBERS – TEACH THE PRINCIPLES OF NONVIOLENCE DEVELOPED BY DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. FOR RECONCILING CONFLICT. STREET WORKERS INTERVENE IN POTENTIALLY VIOLENT SITUATIONS, OFFERING MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICES, AND HELP PREVENT RETALIATION OF COMMUNITY VIOLENCE BY OFFERING NONVIOLENT SOLUTIONS. STREET WORKERS VISIT SHOOTING SCENES AND EMERGENCY ROOMS IN AN EFFORT TO QUICKLY STEM-OFF RETALIATION. STREET WORKERS OFFER SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY-BASED CRISIS INTERVENTION, MEDIATION, AND SERVE AS MENTORS TO AT-RISK YOUTH. THE PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE STREET WORKERS WORK IN TANDEM TO ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE WITH SOME OF THE MOST VIOLENT CITY

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COMBATANTS IN REAL OR PERCEIVED DISPUTES. STREET WORKERS APPEAR IN "FULL FORCE" IN TIME OF CRISIS AND IN OPEN DISPUTES. BY WORKING ALL "HOT-SPOTS," THE STREET WORKERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE FEUDING SIDES AND ARE EQUIPPED TO ASSIST IN PARTICULAR CASES.

- THE DEPARTMENT PARTNERED WITH FAMILY SERVICE OF RHODE ISLAND WHICH IS THE OLDEST AND LARGEST NON-PROFIT HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY IN RHODE ISLAND TO REPLICATE AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY POLICING-CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF POLICE AND MENTAL-HEALTH CLINICIANS FIRST PIONEERED BY THE YALE CHILD STUDY CENTER AND THE NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT POLICE DEPARTMENT IN 1992. TOGETHER, WE CREATED A "POLICE GO TEAM" IN WHICH A TRAINED SOCIAL SERVICE CLINICIAN IS CALLED TO A CRIME SCENE TO TREAT VICTIMS AS WELL AS PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP SERVICES TO THE VICTIM, THE VICTIM'S FAMILY, AND THE POLICE OFFICERS RESPONDING TO THE SCENE. THESE CLINICIANS RIDE IN PATROL CARS EVERY NIGHT AS PARTNERS WITH OFFICERS ON ACTIVE PATROL.
- THE DEPARTMENT PARTNERED WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION WHERE PROBATION OFFICERS ARE ASSIGNED TO NEIGHBORHOOD POLICE DISTRICT OFFICES AND THEIR CASELOAD IS SPECIFIC TO THAT NEIGHBORHOOD. THEY SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY, PARTICIPATE IN

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MEET AND GREET ORIENTATION MEETINGS, AND PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED OVERSIGHT AND DIRECTION TO THOSE RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY.

- AND FINALLY, IN 2006, THE NATIONAL AND RHODE ISLAND URBAN LEAGUES APPROACHED THE DEPARTMENT ABOUT WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPLEMENT A DRUG MARKET INTERVENTION INITIATIVE IN THE LOCKWOOD PLAZA NEIGHBORHOOD OF PROVIDENCE. THE DRUG MARKET INTERVENTION INITIATIVE IS BASED ON THE INITIAL WORK OF JOHN JAY PROFESSOR DAVID KENNEDY IN HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA.

LOCKWOOD PLAZA WAS NOTORIOUS FOR OPEN AIR-DRUG DEALING AND VIOLENT CRIME. THE DEPARTMENT BEGAN A JOINT INVESTIGATION WITH THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION, THE RHODE ISLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, AND THE U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TARGETING STREET AND MID-LEVEL DEALERS OF CRACK COCAINE IN THE LOCK PLAZA NEIGHBORHOOD.

THE LOCKWOOD INITIATIVE IS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS IN BRINGING CRIME DOWN AND RESTORING A SENSE OF CLAM AND HOPE TO THE CITIZENS OF LOCKWOOD. THE CULMINATION OF THE EFFORT COULD BE SEEN THIS PAST JULY WHEN PROVIDENCE HOSTED A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE SPONSORED DRUG MARKET INTERVENTION WORKSHOP AND INVITED ALL THE PARTICIPANTS TO A LOCKWOOD COMMUNITY

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CELEBRATION COOKOUT. OVER ONE HUNDRED COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED THE EVENT AND THE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS SAW THE REMARKABLE TURNAROUND MADE IN THE LOCKWOOD PLAZA NEIGHBORHOOD.

MANY OF THE INITIATIVES THAT I HAVE OUTLINED TODAY, AND OTHERS THAT TIME DOES NOT PERMIT, WERE BORN FROM FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH AND STARTED WITH FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE, THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE, AND SPECIFICALLY, PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS AND EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT FUNDS, WHICH WERE RECENTLY ELIMINATED OR DRAMATICALLY REDUCED IN THE LAST FEDERAL BUDGET. I ASK YOU TODAY TO RESTORE THESE MUCH NEEDED FUNDS IN ORDER FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS SUCH AS THESE TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND ASSIST POLICE DEPARTMENTS IN FIGHTING CRIME AND IMPROVING OUR CITIZENS' QUALITY OF LIFE.

IN CLOSING, I SIT HERE TODAY SPEAKING FOR MY COMMUNITY AND MY CHILDREN, NEARLY 26,000 CHILDREN OF PROVIDENCE. I BELIEVE THAT ANY AMERICAN POLICE CHIEF WORTH HIS SALT WOULD TELL YOU THAT THE BEST WAY TO FIGHT CRIME IS TO INVEST IN OUR CHILDREN AND TO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS. TOO MANY OF OUR CHILDREN IN OUR INNER CITIES ARE POOR AND ARE FRIGHTENED OF THE VIOLENCE AROUND THEM. THEY HAVE COME TO

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KNOW THE FACE OF VIOLENCE ALL TOO INTIMATELY, ALL TOO PERSONALLY. THESE ARE OUR CHILDREN. THEY ARE AMERICAN CHILDREN. I BELIEVE OUR NATION MUST NOT JUST PROTECT OUR CHILDREN AT THE BORDERS FROM THE THREAT OF FOREIGN ATTACKS, BUT ALSO PROTECT OUR CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE WITHIN THE COMMUNITIES WHERE WE LIVE.

WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TODAY'S POLICE DEPARTMENTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OUR CITIZENS OF OUR RESPECTIVE COMMUNITIES. GOOD POLICING THAT IS WELL DESIGNED AND WELL MANAGED SHOULD BE EMBRACED AND SUPPORTED. IT WILL SAVE LIVES, AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES. MR. CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS, I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY HERE TODAY, AND I AM AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS. THANK YOU.

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EXHIBITS

1. Part I Crimes 2002 versus 2007

2. Part I Crime Trend 2002 to 2007

3. Providence Journal news article entitled "Community policing marks 5th year," highlighting the many successes of the department's community policing initiative.

4. E-newsletter that explains partnership with the ProvPlan, the administrator of the Department's statistical analysis and crime mapping system (commonly known as Compstat).

5. Compstat produced Crime Incidents and Calls for Service Hot Spot Map of the Lockwood neighborhood.

6. Press release announcing all eligible gun crimes will be prosecuted federally under a Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative between the United States Attorney's Office, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and the Providence Police Department.

7. Providence Journal news article entitled "A Community-Police Partnership transforms Olneyville, Rhode Island,' highlighting the Community Safety Initiative in the Olneyville neighborhood.

8. Innovative Solutions to Youth Violence: Street Workers Community Outreach Program and the Providence Police Department Partnership

9. Fact Sheet: The Providence Police Department and Family Service of Rhode Island Partnership

10. Providence Journal news article entitled "Closing 'crack highway,'" highlighting the Lockwood Drug Market Intervention Initiative

11. Providence Journal news article entitled "Providence cookout celebrates community's progress," under the Lockwood Drug Market Intervention Initiative

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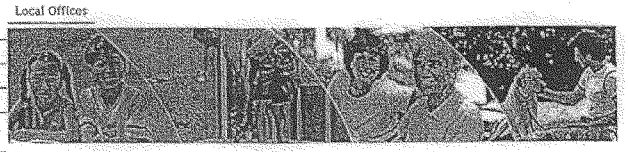

A Community-Police Partnership Transforms Olneyville, Rhode Island

13 Nov 2007

Olneyville, in Providence, Rhode Island was once a community threatened by drugs, crime and prostitution. Now, thanks to an award-winning partnership between local community development groups and police departments, crime has been reduced by as much as 70% in some areas. Today, Olneyville is a thriving community with waiting lists of potential residents.

New homes on Aleppo Street in Olneyville, RI

Olneyville Housing, with the help of the LISC Rhode Island and others, kickstarted the transformation when it set out to acquire and rehabilitate problem real estate and to enlist the help o the police. The collaboration not only reduced crime but resulted in 51 new affordable homes, 2 new storefronts, and the revitalization of the Woonasquatucket Greenway, including the new nine-acre Riverside Park

The MetLife Foundation, which recognizes partnerships between community development groups and police departments that have reduced crime and otherwise improved low- to moderate-income communities, awarded $25,000 to Olneyville Housing Corporation and the Police Department for their successes in Olneyville.

> Read more on The Providence Journal's website

Article Type: News

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Part I Crime 2002-2007

Providence, RI

	2002	2007	Change
Murder	23	14	-39%
Rape	95	34	-64%
Robbery	560	392	-30%
Aggravated Assault	603	500	-17%
Burglary	2,206	1,746	-21%
Motor Vehicle Theft	2,950	1,654	-44%
Larceny	7,602	5,481	-28%
Total Crime	**14,039**	**9,821**	**-30%**

Providence Police Department

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Part I Crime 2002-2007

Providence, RI

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Murder	23	20	18	22	11	14
Rape	95	107	84	99	45	34
Robbery	560	520	414	433	393	392
Aggravated Assault	603	678	569	591	489	500
Burglary	2,206	1,697	1,688	1,878	1,790	1,746
Motor Vehicle Theft	2,950	2,781	2,300	2,359	1,788	1,654
Larceny	7,602	6,819	6,412	5,808	5,313	5,481
Total Crime	**14,039**	**12,622**	**11,485**	**11,190**	**9,829**	**9,821**

Providence Police Department

"New Strategies for Combating Violent Crime: Drawing Lessons from Recent Experience"
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Wednesday, September 10, 2008
Statement of U.S. Senator Russell D. Feingold

Mr. Chairman, thank you for chairing this important hearing.

I am very pleased that the committee is taking a look at creative ways to combat violent crime in this country, especially in light of the increase in violent crime in this country in 2005 and 2006. According to the 2006 FBI Uniform Crime Report, violent crime in my home state of Wisconsin increased by 18.1 percent between 2005 and 2006 – a statistic that has translated into very real concerns for me and many of my constituents. In a trend that I hope continues, the FBI Uniform Crime Report indicates violent crime nationwide dropped 1.4 percent between 2006 and 2007. While this drop is encouraging, it is an average, and does not mean that violent crime decreased everywhere across the country. Unfortunately, violent crime in Milwaukee and Green Bay, two of the biggest cities in my state, continued to rise between 2006 and 2007. So it is vital that Congress continue to focus its attention on this issue.

We learned in the 1990s that providing more federal resources to state and local law enforcement agencies, in the form of federal grant programs and research initiatives, helps to reduce violent crime. Yet in the past eight years, the Justice Department has ignored these lessons, and has retreated from the successful federal commitments made in the 1990s.

To address violent crime, Congress must provide adequate funding to a number of federal grant programs, including the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program, which provides critical funding to help fight violent and drug-related crime, and the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program, which is instrumental in providing funding on a range of crime-fighting techniques. I have heard again and again how important these programs have been to Wisconsin law enforcement efforts.

Both of these programs have suffered funding cuts in recent years, and the Byrne program was hit especially hard in fiscal year 2008, which I strongly opposed. Unfortunately, this trend continued in the President's budget proposal for fiscal year 2009. He proposed eliminating funding for both the Byrne JAG and COPS programs, replacing them with new, and woefully underfunded proposals. Congress must reject the President's proposals, as it has before, and must provide funding at levels adequate to allow our state and local partners to keep our communities safe. In particular, Congress must not repeat the mistake of 2008 in

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its funding of the Byrne JAG program that is so critical in the fight against violent and drug-related crime.

But funding for these federal grant programs is not the only solution. When state and local law enforcement receive federal support for policing, they have difficult decisions to make on how to spend those federal dollars. That is why Senator Specter and I have introduced the PRECAUTION Act. Though small in scope, it is an important step in augmenting the essential financial support the federal government provides to our state and local law enforcement partners through programs such as the Byrne Justice Assistance grants or the COPS grants.

The PRECAUTION Act will create a national commission to review the range of crime prevention and intervention programming available, to identify the most successful strategies, and to report on those findings to the criminal justice community so that successful programs can be replicated in other parts of the country. It will also fund a targeted grant program through the National Institute of Justice to support new, promising and innovative techniques that need federal dollars to be developed into more reliable strategies. In general, it will provide a resource for the criminal justice community to turn to when making decisions about how to further integrate prevention and intervention strategies into traditional law enforcement practices. I named the legislation the PRECAUTION Act because it is far better to invest in precautionary measures now than it is to pay later the costs of crime—a cost borne not only in dollars but in lives.

I very much appreciate the support for this legislation of the National Sheriffs' Association, the Wisconsin Chief of Police Association, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, the Council for Excellence in Government, the American Society of Criminology, and the Consortium of Social Science Associations.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for convening this important hearing.

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A STATEMENT TO:
SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Re: New Strategies for Combating Violent Crime: Drawing Lessons from Recent Experience

10 September 2008

DR. GEORGE L. KELLING

Professor, School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers Newark University
Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you.

During the past five years, I have worked on the ground in six cities: Newark, Los Angeles, Denver, Boston, Milwaukee, and Allentown (PA). In Newark, homicide is down in comparison to 2007 by 40%; in Los Angeles, 9% (a two year decline of 23%); Milwaukee, 30%; Boston, 13%; and Denver, 22%. Allentown's homicide rate has held steady, but our efforts have just begun there. In these cities I have worked with political and community leaders, citizens in neighborhoods, public and private agencies, and police officials ranging from chiefs to line police officers. Two common threads run through my experiences in each of these cities: first, the need for leadership, and, second, a shift in

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approach on the part of all concerned from reacting to crime after it occurs to "stopping the next crime."

The sources of leadership in addressing crime problems vary from community to community: in some locations it is political; in others, police; in others, both; in yet others, a mix of private and public agencies. Regardless, these leaders, almost all of whom saw violence surge in their cities, have been appalled by the carnage on their streets and deeply committed to ending it. As important, they had learned from colleagues, the literature, and their own experiences what had to be done to reduce violence. Specifically, they understood that the reactive model of crime control had failed miserably and that they had to take political and organizational risks to field effective violence prevention.

In the following, I will describe briefly the basic methods of crime prevention. I can provide more detail if there are questions. Second, I will revisit the experience of New York City, a city enjoying crime declines that arguably are unparalleled in history and from which I believe there is much to learn. There is much I will not discuss that relates to crime prevention and reduction: the need for social, spiritual, recreational, and educational services; employment; family assistance

and support; and others. My focus, instead, will be on five proximate measures that most communities could move to immediately. None are very "sexy" or even new, but conceiving, implementing, and sustaining the programmatic forms they take can be complicated, depending on the agency, its resources, and the shape of the problems. Some measures will have impact on their own, others, depending on the neighborhood and the problems, will need to be implemented in tandem. In brief, the five are:

1. *Increase the "Felt" Presence of Capable Guardians:*[1] Starting with police but moving on to prosecution, probation and parole, other governmental agencies, and even the courts, we must increase the real presence of each in neighborhoods. For police this means getting out of their cars, walking, riding bicycles, meeting with citizens, and in other ways becoming an active neighborhood presence. In prosecution, it would mean having community prosecutors meet regularly with citizens in neighborhoods to

[1] I borrow the term "capable guardian" from my colleague at Rutgers, Dr. Marcus Felson. Also, I use to term "felt" presence to differentiate from presences in communities that go largely unnoticed, i.e., police riding around in cars waiting for the next call for service.

understand their problems and devise solutions. I could give examples for other disciplines as well.

2. *Persuade People, Especially the Young, to Behave:* Law enforcement agencies and others involved in crime reduction efforts need to think beyond formal measures. Among the most fundamental and successful tactics is persuasion. Persuading people can range from simply "talking to them" to complicated programs that link active law enforcement with persuasive ways of communicating with young people on the verge of serious trouble. Both John Jay College Professor David Kennedy and University of Illinois, Chicago Campus Professor Gary Slutkin have developed model programs to persuade people, especially violence-prone youths, to "back off." Kennedy focuses on persuasive efforts by law enforcement officials themselves while Slutkin's program uses reformed young people.

3. *Restore Order:* I am, of course, referring here to an idea that I helped develop: "broken windows." Put simply, broken windows argues that for a community to be safe and prosperous minimal levels of order must be established and maintained. It is no secret

that broken windows has come under considerable academic criticism. Certainly, a broken windows approach – that is, aggressive "paying attention" to minor offenses and disorderly behavior[2] – can be done inappropriately. Yet every city in which I have worked that has achieved substantial crime reduction has also paid careful attention to maintaining order--and with considerable success. I will discuss broken windows in more detail in the second half of my presentation.

4. *Solve Problems:* Until recently, police and other criminal justice agencies have treated violent acts as independent incidents rather than symptoms of problems with both history and future. Right now a relatively small number of youths are carrying guns, dealing drugs, draping themselves in gang colors, and shooting each other to settle what are often trivial disputes. The effects on communities are disastrous and degrading. While we certainly want police and other agencies, especially prosecutors, to be concerned about individual cases and offenders, they need to be

[2] Including in "paying attention" is education, persuasion, warning, citation and arrest.

equally concerned about the community problems that such cases represent and create. Both the Department of Justice and the Police Executive Research Forum have developed inventories of successful problem-solving efforts that address both the prevention of crimes themselves and contextual aspects that facilitate or discourage crime and related conditions in a community. These strategies can inspire similar innovations in other cities.

5. *When Formal Measures are Appropriate, Enforce the Law Swiftly and Fairly:* Finally, law enforcement. I will not say much about this here. Let me summarize, however, by noting that a small population of offenders is busily nominating itself for incarceration by repeatedly committing both minor and serious offenses. For this group, we should have no reluctance to imprison them for extended periods of time. Unfortunately, however, there are at least two problems: first, in the absence of other preventive measures, incarceration has been overused and, second, law enforcement has been applied so capriciously that it

often fails to serve as a deterrent to the "wanna bes" and other youths at the edge.

In sum, there are five proximate means of preventing and reducing violence: presence, persuasion, broken windows, solving problems, and law enforcement. I have no doubt that any community, given dedication, leadership, and sufficient resources can reduce violence. As Los Angeles Chief of Police William Bratton has said, "Preventing crime is not rocket science."

The primary question facing us now is: once we have initially reduced violence in a neighborhood, how do we sustain those gains? I think that close examination of what happened in New York City will help us answer this question. Let me summarize what I believe really happened in New York City.

During the late 1970s, the 1980s, and early 1990s a *demand* for order developed out of a disorder and crime crisis – things were simply so bad that citizens and institutions wanted change in, or wanted out of, New York. An *idea* surfaced as early as the 1970s – call it quality of life, broken windows, or what have you – that order had broken down and threatened the viability of the city itself. A

theory of action[3] developed across a wide swath of public and private organizations[4] and sectors that specified goals and tactics (the goal was restoration of order, the methods ranged from law enforcement in the subway to environmental design in Bryant Park). And, this theory of action was *implemented aggressively and persistently* by a diverse set of organizations ranging from public transportation to Business Improvement Districts (BIDS). By the mid-1990s, police became seriously involved. Under Mayor Giuliani and Commissioner Bratton, police not only adopted a congruent theory of action, they brought with them their under-developed and under-utilized crime prevention capacities.

I would explain both the steepness and persistence of the crime decline in NYC as resulting from the fervent pursuit of self-interest by a critical mass of public and private agencies operating out of a congruent understanding of the nature of the problems and their solutions. Their self-interests included economic, neighborhood safety, the ability to provide services, and others. When joined by the NYPD, with its common understanding and its additional and unique capacities, this critical mass reached a tipping point.

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[3] I am indebted to my colleage Rutgers Newark University Professor Michael Maxfield for the term "theory of action."

[4] These agencies included the New York State Transportation Authority, Bryant Park, Business Improvement Districts, the Mid-Town Community Court, Tompkins Square neighborhood groups, and others.

If my interpretation is correct – a set of important agencies consistently pursued an idea and theory of action that resulted in NYC's steep and persistent crime declines – this also helps explain why, as Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn comments, "other cities that attempt to emulate NYPD by focusing on 'comp-stat' identifying the links between order in public spaces, fear, and crime do not generate the same dramatic outcomes." He goes on: "My experience leading five police agencies is that 'critical mass' is by far the exception rather than the rule."[5] This does not mean that emulating aspects of NY, especially Compstat, is without profit; it means that the achievements are limited – the tipping point that literally changes a city's culture cannot be reached.

Summarizing, we now have a lot of knowledge about ways to prevent crime that if assiduously applied reduce violence. For violence reduction to be sustained, however, a common theory of action must activate a critical mass of community agencies and resources. Without such a common theory of action, cities and communities will pick away here and there, never reaching the tipping point that New York City has.

Two final comments that might seem unrelated to what I have said above, but in fact are not. Both have to do with the fact that the war on terror and related

[5] Personal communication.

assumptions that terror and common crimes are essentially different problems have resulted in the virtual gutting of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), all in the name of terror prevention. These assumptions are not only faulty, they have been a disaster for localities. In fact, terrorists commit common crimes on their way towards terrorist acts and, in doing so, are vulnerable to action by local police.

Second, ongoing support for local law enforcement efforts is crucial to their future success. Their accomplishments in reducing crime during the last 10-12 years is a direct result of the research conducted during the last 40 years. This is not just a pitch for resources for research and other types of support from an academic--every chief with whom I have worked over the past years would make the same claim. If we are to maintain, and improve on, our gains of the recent past, the federal government must view ongoing crime control research and support as equally essential to that needed for medical problems. Both crime problems and terrorism in many senses are ultimately local problems, and must and will be resolved locally. Locals, however, are in need of support.

Thank you for your attention.

Statement Of Chairman Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Hearing on "New Strategies to Combat Violent Crime:
Drawing Lessons from Recent Experience"
September 10, 2008

Today, the Committee turns to the critical issue of violent crime. While we saw great progress in reducing violent crime in the 1990s, that success has largely stalled.

The rate of homicide per person in the United States is nearly six times greater than in Germany, and four times greater than Great Britain or Canada. Since 2000, the number of murders and armed robberies remain nearly unchanged across the nation. These statistics do not tell the whole story, though, as nationwide trends no longer effectively explain what is truly happening in our cities and towns. Too many of our communities are seeing resurgences in violent crime. One such community is Rutland, Vermont, where the Judiciary Committee held a hearing last spring to study that city's effective responses to a disturbing spike in violent crime. Other communities have seen declines in violent crime since 2000, as some major cities like New York have the resources to try new strategies and are reporting historically low crime rates.

At today's hearing, I hope we can begin to look behind these national statistics and trends and learn more about what is working and what is not. I particularly want to hear about the new, community-based strategies that are proving to be more successful than ever and that could lead to another era of substantial crime reduction, as we saw in the 1990s.

No one knows these issues better than Senator Joe Biden. He has long been at the forefront of crime fighting efforts and led us to promote these community-based models of policing. His leadership in writing and passing legislation to create and fund the COPS program and other innovative policing strategies led to the unprecedented drop in violent crime we saw during the 1990s. The support for these initiatives has often been bipartisan. Senator Specter recently called Senator Biden a "leader on crime control" and has long supported Senator Biden's efforts. I know that Joe Biden's leadership will be essential next year as we move to restore our Federal assistance efforts and to formulate the next breakthrough in reducing violent crime in our country.

Since 2000, violent crime statistics have presented us with a new, disturbing dilemma. While violent crime rates overall have remained mostly unchanged, the rates of incarceration nationwide over the past eight years have spiked to levels once thought unimaginable. Today, we imprison more than 2.3 million adults in America, more than any other nation in the world. For the first time ever, one in every 100 adult men in America is in prison or jail. The rates are even more startling for certain minorities. For Hispanics, one out of every 36 men is locked up; for African-Americans, it is one out of every 15. For black men between the ages of 20 and 34, it is one in nine.

If locking up more and more people were the simple answer, we would have seen crime continue to drop over the last eight years. That has not happened. In fact, in many of

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those places where we have locked up the most offenders, crime continues to cripple our communities, particularly in poor and minority neighborhoods.

As a former prosecutor, I have always supported accountability and tough sentences for those who commit serious crimes. But most veteran police chiefs will tell you, as Los Angeles Police Chief Bill Bratton told this Committee earlier this year, you cannot just arrest your way out of this problem. As a Nation, we need to be honest about these basic facts and acknowledge that more mandatory minimums and longer sentences do not make crime go down. We need to figure out what will make crime go down.

As we saw in the 1990s, we have real success in combating violent crime when we focus our communities, and when our communities join with our law enforcement professionals in the fight against crime. Supported by the COPS program in the Clinton administration, community policing has long provided greater safety for our hardest hit neighborhoods.

The focus on communities has also led to new innovations in police strategies that have shown great promise for the future. These new community initiatives have focused on combating youth violence and eradicating entrenched drug markets. Their success is encouraging as evidence grows that these initiatives work to keep crime down.

In High Point, North Carolina, the local police had all but written off the West End, which for decades was dominated by drugs and prostitution. In 2002, police there decided on a new approach, building on earlier models proven successful in the Boston CEASEFIRE initiative. Instead of just doing more sweeps and arresting the usual suspects, police targeted the most serious offenders, met and worked with local community leaders, clergy, and service providers, and united all of these parts of the community to attack the problem together.

As one of our witnesses -- Reverend Summey -- will tell us this morning, the results were clear. Within weeks, drug dealers and prostitutes were gone from the streets; crime fell by more than 50 percent, and now more than five years later, it is still down. More importantly, the community looks and feels like an entirely new place. This initiative involved more than just the police making arrests; it put the community and its police and service providers on the same page, so they could give hope and promise to all its residents. This spirit of unity and joint commitment remains.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the most effective new strategies for combating violent crime so that the next Congress, and the next administration, can be better prepared to help our cities and towns to implement effective anti-crime strategies. Bringing down the rate of violent crime in this country is a vital responsibility, and we should tolerate nothing less than success.

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EVALUATING RECENT CHANGES IN VIOLENT CRIME RATES

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Supplementary testimony submitted to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary for the hearing on "New Strategies for Combating Violent Crime: Drawing Lessons from Recent Experience," Wednesday, September 10, 2008.

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In August of 2006 the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) held a "crime summit" in Washington, DC, to warn the nation of an impending increase in violent crime. The meeting was attended by police chiefs and other officials from cities around the country and resulted in a report, entitled *A Gathering Storm: Violent Crime in America*, documenting violent crime increases in those jurisdictions during 2005 and 2006 (PERF 2006). The meeting and subsequent PERF report generated national publicity (Willing 2006) and calls for the federal government to assist cities in combating the crime rise, especially by hiring more police. The Department of Justice responded by conducting its own investigation of local crime problems (Johnson 2006), the results of which have not been released to date. In the spring of 2007, PERF published another report containing updated crime figures and a renewed call to action (PERF 2007).

This paper evaluates the claim of a "gathering storm" of violent crime in the United States. We argue that increases in violent crime during 2005 and 2006 did not diverge markedly from expectations based on prior fluctuations associated with changing economic conditions and reduced growth in imprisonment. This argument is supported by the results of panel models of robbery and homicide rates between 1970 and 2006, as well as by preliminary Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) data for 2007 showing decreases in both homicide and robbery rates. It appears that the storm clouds broke, but only temporarily. Early signs point to another crime rise that may dwarf those of 2005 and 2006 and for which local communities should begin to plan ahead.

A GATHERING STORM?

PERF based its claim of an upswing in violent crime on data furnished by more than 50 urban police departments represented at the 2006 crime summit. Although the departments were to some degree self-selected and therefore the national representativeness of the PERF sample of jurisdictions is questionable, UCR crime figures for 2005 and 2006 later confirmed nationwide increases in violent crime. Homicide and robbery rates rose 1.8% and 3.0%, respectively, between 2004 and 2005. Homicide rose another 1.8% and robbery increased 6.1% in 2006.[1] PERF regarded a two-year increase in violent crime as a portentous trend reversal that, unless swift counteractions were taken, threatened to reverse the "great American crime decline" of the 1990s (PERF 2006; Zimring 2006).

As a point of departure for evaluating the significance of the 2005-06 rise in homicide and robbery, it is useful to place it in long-term perspective. Figure 1 displays homicide and robbery rates in the United States between 1960 and 2006. Both rose to peak levels in the early 1980s and again in the early 1990s and then fell to 30-year lows by the end of the century. Although the 2005 and 2006 increases are visible, the 1990s crime drop was in no immediate danger of being upended by the new century's "gathering storm" of violent crime. Homicide and robbery rates in 2006 were still below their 1970 levels.

Figure 1 about here

It also is useful to take a closer look at the trends in homicide and robbery since 2000, as shown in Figure 2. Both increased in 2001. Homicide rates continued to rise through 2003. Robbery rates fell until 2004, and then both increased again during the 2005-06 "gathering storm" period. A more accurate, if less dramatic, headline for these

changes might have been "Homicide and Robbery Return to Levels Not Seen for Several Years." Homicide rates were no higher in 2006 than in 2003, and the 2006 robbery rate of 409.4 robberies per 100,000 population was only slightly higher than the 2001 rate of 408.5. The picture that emerges from Figure 2 is year-to-year *volatility* in homicide and robbery rates since 2000, not the relentless rise painted by PERF.

Figure 2 about here

To be fair, PERF highlighted differences across cities in the 2005-06 violent crime escalation, chiefly in its second report (PERF 2007), and warned of particularly pronounced increases in middle-sized cities. The subsequent UCR data confirm that the greatest increases, especially in robbery, occurred in cities with 100,000 to 500,000 residents. This pattern is illustrated in Figure 3, which compares 2004-06 robbery trends in two middle-sized cities, Milwaukee and Oakland, with those in Los Angeles and New York. Whereas robbery rates were flat between 2004 and 2006 in New York and Los Angeles, they increased by 44% and 63%, respectively, in Milwaukee and Oakland.

Figure 3 about here

Increases of this magnitude are clearly troubling and, if sustained over time, might warrant federal assistance. Whether that assistance should be funds to hire more police officers, however, is an open question. To our knowledge, PERF did not conduct or report research showing that the crime increases resulted from a drop in the size of police forces in the affected cities. In early 2007, the Department of Justice announced a small grants program for cities experiencing crime increases (Johnson 2007). Whether the Department of Justice investigation of local crime problems found that the quality or quantity of policing was responsible for the crime increases remains unknown.

IMPRISONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

What caused it? That is key open question arising from the claims-making and policy response associated with the crime rise of 2005 and 2006 Two candidate explanations from prior research on crime trends in the United States direct attention to imprisonment trends and changing economic conditions (Rosenfeld and Fornango 2007).

The United States imprisons or jails more persons per capita than any other nation in the world, by far (PEW Center on the States 2008: Table A-7). Several studies have shown that crime reductions are associated with rising imprisonment rates (Levitt 1996; Liedka, Piehl, and Useem 2006; Marvell and Moody 1994). The growth in imprisonment has slowed in recent years, after escalating dramatically during the 1980s and 1990s. The number of state and federal prisoners increased by 2.6% per year from 2000 to 2006, well under half the yearly growth rate of 6.2% between 1990 and 1999.[2] Slower growth in imprisonment, then, may have put upward pressure on crime rates since 2000.

Changing economic conditions also may help to explain variation in crime rates during the current century. Several recent studies attribute swings in crime rates, including the 1990s crime drop, to corresponding ups and downs in the economy, as revealed in indicators of unemployment, economic growth, wages, and collective perceptions of economic conditions (Arvanites and Defina 2006; Grogger 1998; Raphael and Winter-Ebmer 2001; Rosenfeld and Fornango 2007). Since 2000, the U. S. economy has displayed much the same year-to-year volatility as crime rates, which prompts the question of whether the recent crime increases can be tied to deteriorating economic conditions.

Figures 4 and 5 display the yearly trends between 2000 and 2006 in homicide and robbery rates along with trends in the Index of Consumer Sentiment (ICS), which is derived from monthly population surveys conducted by the University of Michigan (http://www.sca.isr.umich.edu/). The ICS taps consumers' perceptions of their current economic circumstances, general economic conditions, and anticipations of future changes. It has proven to be a robust predictor of changes in unemployment and prices (Curtin 2002, 2003), and in robbery and property crime rates (Rosenfeld and Fornango 2007). To place the series on the same scale in the figures, they have been converted to units of standard deviation from their respective 2000-06 mean values. The ICS values are inverted, so that higher values represent greater consumer pessimism.

Figures 4 and 5 about here

The homicide trends parallel those in consumer sentiment between 2000 and 2006. Homicide increases are associated with rising consumer pessimism, and homicide declines are associated with falling pessimism during the period. Generally the same pattern characterizes the annual changes in robbery and pessimism, except for the year 2003, when robbery rates dropped but consumer pessimism rose slightly. The figures offer suggestive, albeit limited, evidence of a relationship between recent changes in violent crime rates and collective perceptions of economic conditions. Stronger evidence comes from a longitudinal analysis of robbery and homicide trends over the period 1970 through 2006 that includes additional economic indicators, imprisonment rates, police staffing rates, and demographic controls, as described below.

DATA AND METHODS

We estimate yearly changes in 1970-2006 homicide and robbery rates in panel models containing the Index of Consumer Sentiment (ICS), the unemployment rate, Gross Domestic Product per capita in constant dollars (GDP), imprisonment rates per 100,000 population lagged one year (prison-1), the number of sworn police personnel per 100,000 population (police), the percentage of the population black (race), and the percentage of the population between the ages of 15 and 24 (youth) and age 45 and older (aged).[3] These indicators represent many of the major explanations of temporal change in crime rates documented in prior research (Blumstein and Wallman 2005; Levitt 2004). We also include the lagged crime rate in the models to absorb unmeasured influences on crime and as a control for serial correlation in the error terms. To correct for skewness and induce homogeneity in error variance, all the variables have been transformed to their natural log, which also has the desirable property of yielding coefficients representing the percentage change in the outcome given a 1% change in the predictor.

Our models evaluate temporal change in homicide and robbery rates within the four major U. S. census regions (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West). It would be preferable to conduct the analysis at the city, metropolitan, or state level in order to maximize cross-sectional variation in the data, but the consumer sentiment data are not available at those levels of aggregation. In any case, our primary interest is in the sources of short-run variation in the crime rates over time. Augmented Dickey-Fuller tests (not shown) indicate that the homicide and robbery series are non-stationary in log levels. Each series was transformed to its first difference ($Y_t - Y_{t-1}$), and the tests on the transformed series showed them to be stationary in first differences.[4] Therefore, all of the

variables in the analysis have been first-differenced and represent year-over-year change in the log crime rates and predictors.

Finally, we have included linear and quadratic time trends and dummy variables representing region fixed effects in our models.[5] First-differencing the data series and lagging the ICS and prison indicator reduces the maximum N of 148 (37 years x 4 regions) to 140 data points available for the analysis. Given the small sample size, we did not include year fixed effects, which would have absorbed an additional 36 degrees of freedom. The models were estimated using ordinary least squares regression.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents bivariate correlations and descriptive statistics for the variables in the analysis. Homicide and robbery exhibit significant correlations, weak to moderate in magnitude, with the economic indicators and the age variables. The imprisonment measure is significantly associated with homicide but not with robbery. The two offense types are significantly related to both the contemporaneous consumer sentiment measure (ICS) and the lagged ICS-1, even though the two consumer sentiment measures are not significantly correlated with one another ($r = .153$). The lagged ICS-1 may be independently related to homicide and robbery because it leads other measures of economic change, as revealed by the sizable correlations between ICS-1 and GDP and unemployment ($r = .602$ and $-.478$, respectively). It appears, then, that year-over-year changes in homicide and robbery are associated with changes in the economy, especially as revealed in a measure of collective perceptions of economic conditions.

These suggestive results are largely confirmed by the multivariate analysis of robbery and homicide trends.

Table 1 about here

REGRESSION RESULTS

The results of our multivariate analysis of variation in regional homicide and robbery rates between 1970 and 2006 are presented in Table 2. The year-over-year homicide and robbery trends are significantly associated with both the contemporaneous and lagged measures of consumer sentiment: Decreases in consumer optimism are related to increases in homicide and robbery over the 36 year period. The result for robbery is consistent with prior research (Rosenfeld and Fornango 2007), but the homicide result is new and suggests that collective perceptions of economic conditions affect trends in violent crimes other than robbery.

Table 2 about here

Robbery trends also are strongly associated with changes in economic growth rates as measured by real GDP per capita ($b = -.969$, $p < .01$). A one percent drop in GDP results in roughly a one percent increase in robbery rates. No effect of GDP is found for homicide. Prior research yields similar results (Arvanites and Defina 2006). Unemployment rates are inversely associated with both homicide and robbery as well: Declines in unemployment yield significant increases in the two violent crimes. This result is sensitive to model specification. With GDP and ICS-1 omitted, unemployment has negligible and non-significant effects on both homicide and robbery (results not shown).

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The one-year lagged imprisonment rates are negatively associated with both homicide and robbery. A 1% increase in imprisonment yields just over a .2% drop in the homicide and robbery rates. Although consistent with prior research (e.g., Marvell and Moody 1994), the negative effect of imprisonment on crime rates may be confounded with the positive effect of crime on growth in imprisonment. Conducting the analysis on the variables in first differences, lagging the imprisonment rate and including the lagged offense measures in the models address this problem to some degree, but unbiased estimates of the effect of imprisonment on crime probably require the use of instrumental variables (correlated with imprisonment, uncorrelated with crime) to eliminate the simultaneity in the relationship between imprisonment and crime (Spelman 2008).

Both homicide and robbery are reduced by growth in the older population, and robbery reductions also are significantly associated with year-over-year drops in the youth population, a somewhat surprising result given the disproportionate involvement in street crimes by adolescents. Neither robbery nor homicide is significantly related to changes in regional racial composition over the 1970-2006 period.

Finally, we find little evidence for PERF's favored remedy for recent crime increases, increasing the size of local police forces. Year-over-year changes in police per capita have no significant effect on regional homicide and robbery trends. This (non)result should be interpreted with caution. It is undoubtedly more appropriate to model the effect of police on crime at the city rather than the regional level, and the police-crime relationship is subject to the same possible simultaneity bias that affects the relationship between imprisonment and crime. Nonetheless, changes in police size

within regions appear to have little connection to year-to-year variation in the two violent crimes under consideration in the current analysis.

In summary, we find that short-run variations in regional homicide and robbery rates are a function of changing economic conditions, imprisonment rates, and population age composition, net of changes in police per capita, racial composition, region fixed effects, linear and quadratic time trends, and lagged changes in crime rates. Our results tell a rather different story about recent crime increases than the PERF warning of a "gathering storm." They suggest that crime rates move up and down over time in tune with changes in the economy and levels of incarceration. Imprisonment growth has slowed, but the economy has undergone fairly rapid swings in recent years, as reflected in the changes in consumer sentiment shown in Figures 4 and 5. Consumer sentiment not only leads other economic indicators in predicting changes in the economy but also appears to be a leading indicator of crime rate changes. The finding that last year's consumer sentiment significantly affects this year's crime rates is especially important on substantive grounds, because it offers the opportunity to anticipate future crime changes. What then might consumer sentiment tell us about expected changes in homicide and robbery in the years ahead?

2007 AND BEYOND

Unlike crime data, information from the nation's major economic indicators, including consumer sentiment, is generally available on a monthly basis and is very timely. Michigan's consumer sentiment measures are released within days after the monthly reporting period. Given the recent volatility in the U. S. economy, it is useful to

examine the monthly ICS for the past several years, up to June of 2008, the most recent data available as of this writing.

Figure 6 about here

The economic boom of the 1990s was followed by a recession in 2001, the last official U. S. recession to date recorded by the National Bureau of Economic Research (http://www.nber.org/cycles.html). As shown in Figure 6, consumer confidence and optimism rose in late 2001, fell through the second half of 2002 and into early 2003, and then rose again through early 2004. The ICS plunged in the second half of 2005, in the midst of PERF's crime warnings, but then increased in the latter part of 2006 into 2007. That rise in consumer sentiment should have resulted in some crime relief, and evidently it did. Preliminary UCR data for 2007 show a drop of -2.7% in homicide and -1.2% in robbery from their 2006 levels (http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/2007prelim/).

A modest crime drop in 2007 would not have been expected from the headlines the PERF crime summit generated the year before. But PERF's crime warning may not have been incorrect so much as premature. Consumer sentiment entered a very steep and lengthy decline during 2007, reaching a value of 56.4 by June of 2008, a full 42% drop from the previous peak in early 2007 and well below the levels to which it sank during the 2001 recession. The influence of changing economic conditions on robbery and homicide rates revealed in our longitudinal analysis, particularly the lagged effect of consumer sentiment, implies that crime rates should have begun to increase in late 2007 and early 2008 in response to the drop in consumer confidence and optimism.

Unfortunately, nationwide crime data are not available for the first half of 2008 to determine whether crime rates were heading back up. However, the police departments

in the nation's largest cities, New York and Los Angeles, post up-to-date crime figures on their websites. Both cities experienced homicide increases through the end of June, 2008, compared with the same period in 2007: + 8.2% in New York and + 4.3% in Los Angeles. Robberies also increased in New York by 4.4% but dropped by 8.2% in Los Angeles over the first half of the previous year.[6] Although somewhat mixed, these crime changes are especially noteworthy because a sizable chunk of all homicides (6.3%) and robberies (8.5%) occurs in the two largest cities and because New York and Los Angeles exhibited flat or declining violent crime rates during the previous few years, even as other cities were experiencing increases (see Figure 3).

As of this writing it is too early to tell whether the nation is heading into a major crime increase. But the early signs in the largest cities and drop in consumer confidence to near historic lows are worrisome. It may be time for PERF -- or the Justice Department -- to hold another crime summit, and it would be a good idea to incorporate research on the factors underlying short-run changes in crime rates. Local communities cannot reverse the business cycle, but they can and should plan ahead for crime increases before it is too late to do much about them.

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Table 1. Pooled Correlations and Descriptive Statistics (N=140)[a]

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Homicide	1.000						
(2) Robbery	.735*	1.000					
(3) ICS	-.428*	-.440*	1.000				
(4) ICS-1	-.281*	-.438*	.153	1.000			
(5) Unem	.188*	.274*	-.243*	-.478*	1.000		
(6) GDP	-.217*	-.453*	.416*	.602*	-.617*	1.000	
(7) Prison-1	-.244*	-.145	.119	.064	.015	-.098	1.000
(8) Police	-.014	.010	-.100	.166	-.145	.124	.120
(9) Youth	.089	-.017	-.026	.022	.034	.070	-.360*
(10) Aged	-.285*	-.317*	.072	.006	-.159	.137	-.238*
(11) Race	.024	.017	.048	-.046	.065	-.152	.058
Mean	-.008	-.004	.004	.004	-.002	.015	.045
Sd	.067	.082	.103	.105	.126	.027	.054

Table 1, cont.

	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
(8) Police	1.000			
(9) Youth	-.096	1.000		
(10) Aged	.011	.233*	1.000	
(11) Race	-.227*	.181*	-.232*	1.000
Mean	.004	-.006	.006	.006
Sd	.020	.018	.008	.009

*p < .05

[a] Variables are logged (base e) and first-differenced.

Table 2. OLS Regression Results for Regional Homicide and Robbery Rates, 1970-2006 (N=140)[a]

	Homicide	Robbery
ICS	-.274 **	-.261 **
	(.050)	(.056)
ICS-1	-.141 *	-.224 **
	(.058)	(.063)
Unem	-.113 *	-.202 **
	(.048)	(.055)
GDP	.032	-.969 **
	(.268)	(.304)
Prison-1	-.225 *	-.229 *
	(.099)	(.110)
Police	-.194	.030
	(.242)	(.272)
Youth	-.306	-.949 *
	(.383)	(.421)
Aged	-2.035 **	-2.118 *
	(.796)	(.909)
Race	-.171	-.101
	(.575)	(.651)
Adj R^2	.404	.506
$F_{(15,124)}$	7.27 **	10.49 **

**p < .01 *p < .05

[a] Variables are logged (base e) and first-differenced. Lagged crime rates, region effects, and time trends.not shown. Standard errors in parentheses.

Figure 1. Homicides and Robberies Per 100,000 Population in the United States, 1960-2006

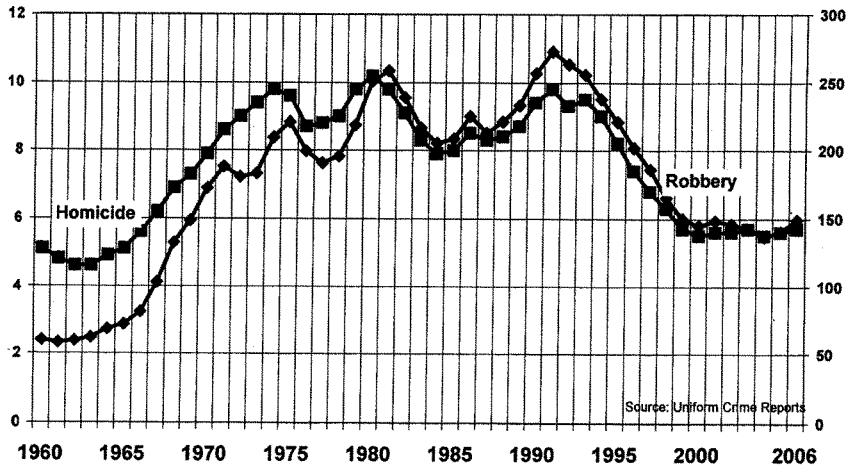


Figure 2. US Homicides and Robberies per 100,000 Population, 2000-2006

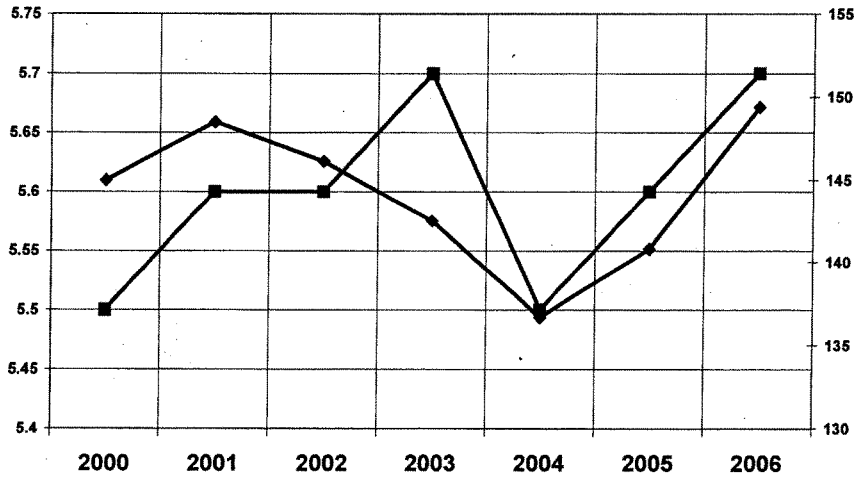


Figure 3. Robbery Rates in New York, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, and Oakland, 2004-2006

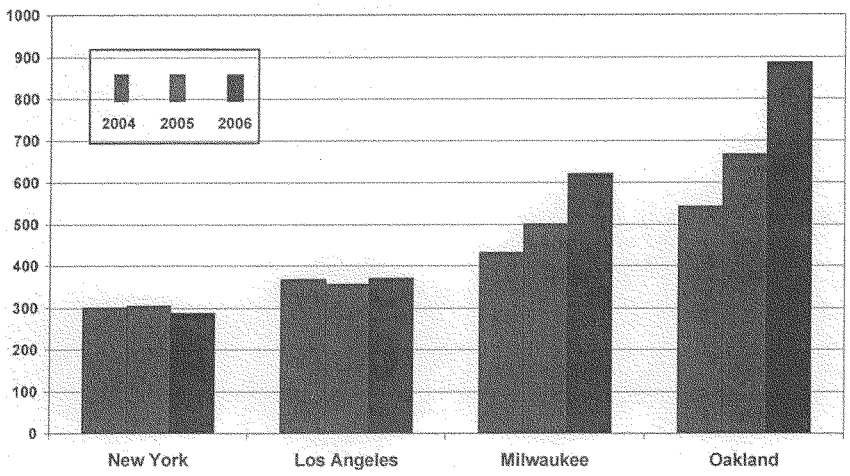


Figure 4. Homicide Rates and Index of Consumer Sentiment (Inverted) in Standard Scores, 2000-06

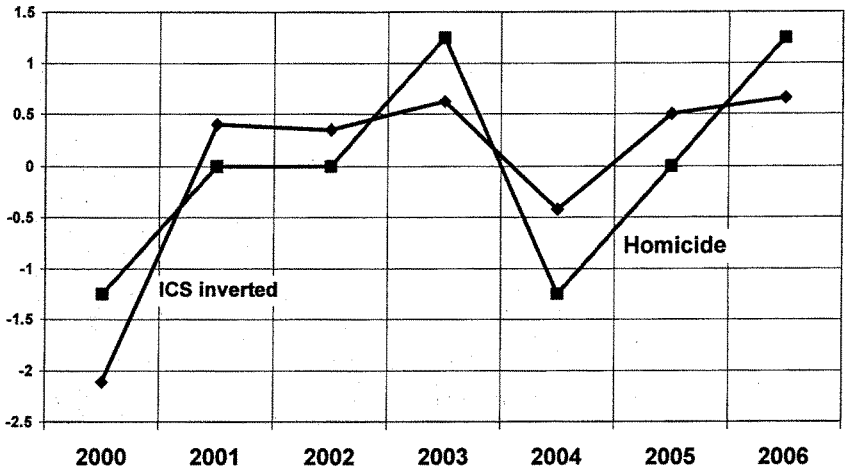


Figure 5. Robbery Rates and Index of Consumer Sentiment (Inverted) in Standard Scores, 2000-06

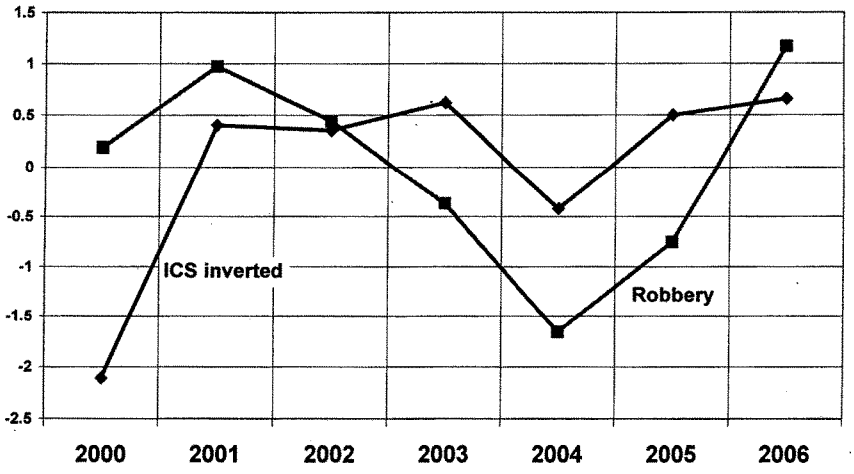
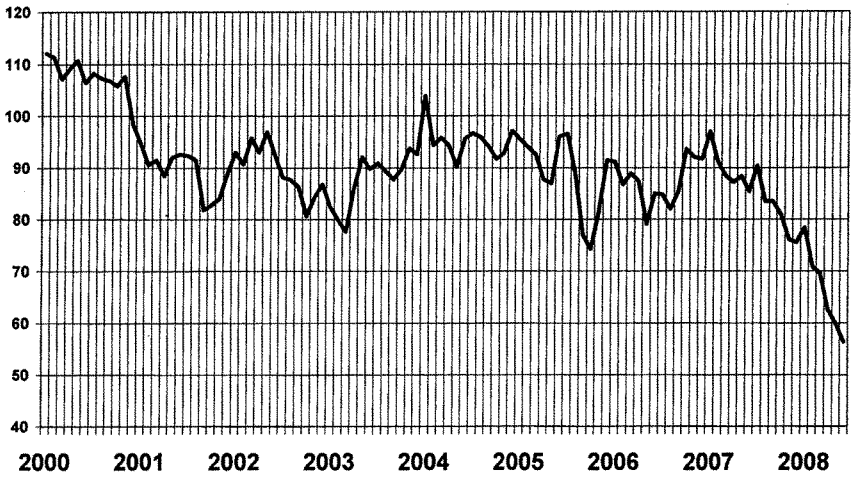


Figure 6. Monthly Index of Consumer Sentiment, January 2000 to June 2008



Notes

[1] See Table 1 of the 2006 Uniform Crime Reports (http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/data/table_01.html). The current analysis of violent crime focuses on homicide and robbery and omits aggravated assaults and rapes. Rapes are notoriously underreported in the UCR and evidence indicates that UCR aggravated assault trends are biased because of changes over time in the classification and recording of assaults by the police (see Rosenfeld 2007).

[2] Computed from Bureau of Justice Statistics prisoner data (http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/prisons.htm).

[3] The models also include the one-year lagged as well as the contemporaneous value of the ICS; prior research indicates that the lagged ICS is significantly associated with crime rates (Rosenfeld and Fornango 2007). The crime and police data are from the UCR; the ICS is from the Michigan consumer surveys; the unemployment rate is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (http://www.bls.gov/bls/employment.htm); GDP is from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp); and the race and age data are from the Census Bureau (www.census.gov).

[4] All results not shown are available from the authors on request.

[5] We also included region specific trends in preliminary analyses. These indicators were not significant and have been dropped from the analyses shown.

[6] The New York and Los Angeles crime data are posted at http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/crime_prevention/crime_statistics.shtml and http://www.lapdonline.org/crime_maps_and_compstat.

September 7, 2008

To: The United States Senate
Judiciary Committee
Senator, Patrick Leahy, Chairman

Regarding: "New Strategies for Combating Violent Crime: Drawing Lessons from Recent Experiences"

From: The following is testimony from Jim Summey of High Point, North Carolina

Honorable Judiciary Committee Members,

When I became pastor of the English Road Baptist Church in May of 1992, I knew part of the history of this community of approximately 1400 hundred people located in the West End area of High Point, North Carolina. As a child a grew up on a small farm no more than fifteen miles away from the West End and heard stories in the late fifties and sixties of the pool halls and the beer joints of this infamous area.

The West End Community, for most of the 20th century had been a blue collar area of town. West End neighbors labored in the nearby cotton/hosiery mills and worked in the many furniture factories (rightly so for High Point s noted as the furniture capitol of the world). People worked, worshipped and recreated in this area as this little niche of town had most of the amenities that people needed years ago.

With changes that began in the mid and late seventies in the hosiery and furniture markets, there was some slow down in manufacturing. Also, many of the folks who had labored in those jobs now were nearing retirement and fewer workers were devoted to the trades of the area. Private or company owned housing of the West End began to be sold as investment property and by the eighties the area had become a neighborhood of renters with fewer home owners or seekers of such housing. A once fairly stable community became more transitional. A since of "not knowing the neighbors" developed, as did more distance in relationships and lack of camaraderie took place. Crime rates began to rise a bit and the once "friendly fights" became more intense. Then, in the late eighties, the advent of crack cocaine found a "home" in this part of town and the sales of such along with all the vices of prostitution, violence, intimidation, neighborhood suppression, and a general sense of unrest developed.

Into the nineties the West End became a place where the residents lived in fear and in a "lock-down" mentality. Gun fire rang out much too frequently. Street robberies and muggings of every nature were every day events. Prostitution was so

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rampant that on one Sunday morning in 1997 there were so many prostitutes walking the sidewalks around the church area that church attendees could not turn into the parking lot for the "Johns" picking up the girls. Calls to the police resulted in frustration for me, West End residents, and even the police. Race relations decreased due to the high number of African American young men involved in the drug dealing and the crimes creating distrust between them and other race groups.

The police utilized every traditional method of policing and deterrence available. Drug raids, drug sweeps, prostitution stings, and round-ups were classically utilized. Yet, so very often the results were so short lived, only to see every crack-house, the street corners, and most of the girls back in business within one to two weeks. Citizens complained, tempers flared, and frustration ran amuck creating a very unhealthy community.

In 1999 three of the West End Church pastors began to meet and discuss the problems of the area. All three (myself included) shared the same concerns and frustrations. We decided to include other members from the three churches (a Reform UCC church, a Methodist church, and a Baptist Church) to meet monthly and discuss how we could work together to have positive impact on the community. We formed a separate non-profit called West End Ministries, Inc. We shared our plight with the City of High Point's Community Development Department. We were encouraged to talk with community residents and have a community meeting. The first meeting yielded 117 residents who came together where we identified three outstanding areas of concern: 1. Crime/Violence; 2. Youth Concerns (wandering and no after school guidance) and 3. Neighborhood appearance and unhealthy housing/living conditions.

Each church took an area of concern: Rankin Methodist Church addressed youth concerns and opened their doors to host a neighborhood Boys and Girls Club; First Reformed Church took on neighborhood appearance, organized meeting with city inspectors, pushed community clean-up days, made housing ordinances aware to rent lords and pushed for improvements and opened a Thrift Sore to provide basic human living necessities at little to no cost. The English Road Baptist Church hosted police and community meetings, urged neighborhood watch programs, worked with language groups to communicate that the police were concerned about their safety, not their green card status. The Baptist Church also started a food ministry and soup kitchen and began feeding the struggling and homeless.

All the above work of the community and the churches helped, but the violence and the drug market activities still prevailed and the community was still fettered by the conditions of lawlessness. Chief Jim Fealy became High Point's new chief of police in January of 2003. The first community meeting that Chief Fealy attended was in the West End. Jim Fealy appeared genuine, caring, professional, competent, and open. I told chief Fealy after the meeting that I appreciate his words, but frankly, I, and many of this community had lost faith in the H.P. Police Department to do anything lasting about our problems. Jim Fealy took my words as a challenge.

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A year latter I was asked to come to a meeting and to just sit and listen. Myself, a few citizens, many city leaders, and police administration heard a, then, Harvard Associate professor talk about some ideas he had about neighborhood drug markets, how they worked, what drove them and how to "undo" them; his name... David Kennedy. David Kennedy articulated my frustration. David communicated in words of reality and with facts and real life observations and with a sociological understanding of the dynamics of communities disrupted by violence associated with drug markets. He shared about the police being honest, supporting the constitution, doing less harm, building relationships with the community, recreating an atmosphere were citizens and police could truly dialogue and do so to learn, not to argue. David talked about the police truly identifying the real perpetrators of the violence and the drug markets and then ask them, (not TELL them), ask them to come to a meeting where the community could tell them that their actions were not acceptable and would no longer be tolerated and that they (the community) supported the police. The community would then give the "called in violent and drug marketing offenders" an ultimatum, "Stop the violence and the drug market and tell us you want to turn your life in a positive direction and we will do all that we can to help you. But, if you continue, we will do all that we can to make sure that you face arrest and the court system." I was asked after this meeting what I thought and I simply said, "It makes sense, it can work." I highly credit Chief Fealy, his command staff and all the High Point Police Department for being bold enough and committed to exploring every avenue to develop a way to help the citizens of High Point live in a better and safer environment. And, I am so grateful to David Kennedy for developing this "way" of approaching crime and violence and staying with his message till someone was willing to implement it.

This new way of approaching crime is interactive with the community and with the criminal elements within communities. This "method" is redeeming and thus is viewed as fair because it utilizes truth and accuracy as tools to pinpoint problem individuals and then, still, gives them a chance to consider how their lives can be different. The community embraces this way of policing because it gives the community a voice and it gives the criminal element a first hand reality check that all along what they thought was approval was only fear, and now the fear is gone and the truth is known. The community embraces this way of policing because everyone works for the good of people who are struggling with lives of criminality and, then, if those who are given "second chances" continue to live lawless, then the community supports incarceration.

May 18th 2004 was the "call-in" day for the West End Drug Initiative. The offenders had been identified and notified by police, area clergy, and citizens that they (the offenders) could come to this meeting with no reprisals, just come and listen. As nine people came to this meeting and heard the messages of the community and the police, a great sense of positive empowerment came over the community and the police who were involved that night. On May 19th, 2004 (the next day), West End was quiet. No one sold drugs on the corner. No one ran from a

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house to the street thirty times a day to do curb service drug delivery; not even one prostitute was seen. No gun shots rang out. There was no yelling and fighting and intimidating congregations of people walking down the middle of the street blocking traffic; a new day had arrived.

One month following the event of May 18, 2004, English Road Baptist Church held its annual summer Vacation Bible School which is a children and youth based event for spiritual enrichment. In the eleven years prior to 2004 we had attendance of between 100 and 130 children; however the most that had ever attended the event from the actual West End Community was 6 kids. Just one month after the call-in of May 18, we had 36 neighborhood children in attendance (the most ever). Overhearing two of the children conversing after one of the sessions that week; one said to another, "Did you walk here?" (The other responded "yes"), followed by "Yeah, we walked too; mama said its ok now." This was just one month after the initiative.

This "new day" still thrives in the West End. Whereas, we led the City of High Point in murders for ten years, there has not been a murder in West End in over four years. New homes are being built. People walk to the stores to purchase goods. Kids walk to church and people sit on their porches and swing in backyard swings. People are planting flower beds and tending them. There is a sense of relief that has lasted because people who were once strangers due to fear and not being able to trust or know each other, now talk, meet on the sidewalks, go to neighborhood meetings, and are working to maintain relationships with law enforcement. Racial relationships have improved very much. Purpose, camaraderie and commitment to causes greater than our differences have filled the voids left by distrust.

The neighborhood sees itself more as a real community, taking on issues other than the violence that once so permeated the streets. Quality of life issues are concerns now because they are also, now, possibilities. Maintenance of the West End and three other areas of high Point where this initiative has been successful is due to continual community and police involvement and an organization in High Point known as the High Point Community Against Violence (a non-profit in its eleventh year). The HPCAV is an organization that works with the police as a multifaceted community voice of addressing acts of violence and sending out positive messages to "Stop the violence." Supporting members of HPCAV, regular citizens, community leaders, elected officials, the police, and community groups are all seeing the value of communicating the message of reaching those in the community who have chosen paths of violence to be a way of life and, now, offering them a positive direction. With this method of policing, involving the community, everyone has a choice to see what life truly can be. This way is a way that brings out the very best of people because it is people living and doing their best to help each other.

Jim Summey

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TESTIMONY OF JEREMY TRAVIS

PRESIDENT OF JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEEE ON

"New Strategies for Combating Violent Crime: Drawing Lessons from Recent Experience"

September 10, 2008

Chairman Leahy and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

It is indeed an honor to be invited by this Committee to offer testimony on the issue of violent crime in America. I am doubly honored to be sharing the panel with these distinguished experts from academia, law enforcement, and communities hard hit by violence.

My testimony this morning consists of two parts. First, I propose to offer some perspectives on the phenomenon of violent crime in America, with a particular focus on ways to place our current rates of violence into appropriate and useful contexts. Second, I would like to make some recommendations about the appropriate federal response to the phenomenon of violent crime, specifically an agenda for the new Administration and new Congress that will take office in January 2009.

Perspectives on the Level of Violence in America.

As this Committee is well aware, over the past twenty years our nation has experienced a dramatic rise and fall in the levels of violence in our communities. In his presentation, Professor Blumstein, who has chronicled changes in crime rates in America for many years, documented that the rates of robbery and murder, as measured by the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), experienced a sharp increase beginning in 1985, then peaked in 1993, and dropped dramatically until 2000, when the rates of both crimes basically leveled off. Setting aside for a moment some year-to-year fluctuations since 2000, we can confidently say that we now experience the lowest levels of violence in a generation.

This new reality obviously constitutes very good news for the nation. We need only remember the very scary atmosphere of the late 1980s -- when violent crime rates were rising rapidly, the introduction of crack cocaine to urban America was destabilizing inner city communities, and commentators announced the emergence of a generation of "super-predators" and warned of a "coming blood bath" – to place the current level of safety and security in proper perspective.

The good news of the unprecedented drop in violence has led to a predictable search for explanations – Why did this happen? What factors contributed to this turn-around? A number of academics, most prominently Dr. Blumstein, have tested various hypotheses, including the strong economy of the late 1990s, the expansion of our prison population, the emergence of crack markets, gun control policies, new policing strategies, demographic shifts, etc. Certainly

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we need to understand the factors that led to the decline in violence to craft policies to reduce those rates even further.

Rather than enter into the debate over which factors contributed to the decline or speculate as to the changing nature of violence in America, I would prefer to focus the Committee's attention on a question often overlooked in today's discussions namely how should we view the current rates of violence?

In my view, we should not be complacent, for one minute, about the current rates of violence. Yes, we are justifiably proud that our nation no longer experiences the high rates of violence seen in the early 1990s. We should celebrate the fact that homicide and robbery rates are below their 1970 levels. Yet, three different perspectives on these national data should give us reason to set our sights much higher. We have no reason to be complacent, and every reason to implement policies that will bring our rates of violence much, much lower.

International Perspective.

While the United States no longer leads the developed world in all forms of violence and property crime, it still has the highest levels of lethal violence. Even after U.S. homicide rates fell by more than 40% during the 1990's, they remained four-to-ten times higher than those of other developed nations.[1] For example, the latest available data on homicide from 2006 show that the homicide rates in the United States (5.7 per 100,000) are more than four times the homicide rates of England and Wales (1.4 per 100,000).[2] The distinguishing characteristic of violence in America is the widespread availability of illegal firearms that are used in the commission of crimes. If we aspire to bring our homicide rates lower, and to provide a level of safety approaching that seen in other countries in the developed world, we need for focus on strategies that reduce the illegal use of firearms.

Sub-national Perspective. We typically measure crime rates at the national level and ask whether property crime and violent crimes are up or down across the country. For many years, these national trends in turn reflected sub-national trends. In other words, if crime went up – or down -- nationally, it likely went up—or down-- in all cities. The increase or decrease may have been sharper or flatter in any given city, but the trends were mostly in the same direction.

Beginning in 2000, this relationship between national and sub-national trends began to weaken. We need only look at some recent examples to illustrate the point. As Dr. Blumstein pointed out, according to the Uniform Crime Report, homicide rates increased slightly in 2005 (1.8%) and 2006 (1.8%), and robbery rates increased in both years as well (3.0% and 6.1%). Yet these national statistics mask important local variations. Between 2004 and 2006, homicides decreased by 25% in Dallas and 31% in Portland, and increased by 23% in Philadelphia and 25%

[1] See attached chart; World Health Organization. Homicides Per 100,000 Population in 14 Nations, 2000

[2] http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/offenses/expanded_information/data/shrtable_07.html; http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs08/hosb0708.pdf

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in Seattle. Robbery rates were essentially flat over those two years in New York and Los Angeles, but increased 44% and 63%, respectively, in Milwaukee and Oakland.[3]
We do not yet have a good understanding of the reasons for these very different crime trends at the sub-national level. But the fact that we are seeing these divergent trends underscores two points. First, in those communities experiencing upward trends in violence, the fact that the national trends are showing only slight increases present little comfort. Second, any national strategy adopted by Congress and the new Administration must include a robust analytical capability to diagnose these local trends, and must target resources to communities where the rates of violence are highest.

Inner City Perspective. A third perspective is perhaps the most important as we consider future directions for policy. We know that crime does not affect all Americans equally. Crime is concentrated in urban America, and particularly in the poorest urban neighborhoods, which are typically communities of color. Furthermore, violent crime is most often committed by, and committed against, young men. So, within this demographic group, of young men living in America's urban neighborhoods, violence is a daily fact of life. Allow me to cite two studies that illustrate this point:

Rochester, NY, has one of the highest homicide rates among the cities in New York State. Beginning in 2001, a team of local and federal law enforcement agencies, working with academics and community groups, conducted an analysis of homicides in Rochester as part of the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) of the Department of Justice. This analysis, carried out by Professor John Klofas of the Rochester Institute of Technology, found that violent crime was concentrated in a core urban area he called the "high crime crescent."

Professor Klofas calculated the homicide rate using a simple methodology that we should replicate in every city across the country. At the time of his research, the homicide rate for the nation as a whole was 8 per 100,000. Among those aged 15-19, it was nearly triple that: 22.4 per 100,000. Among males in that age group, it was more than quadruple the national rate, or 36.3 per 100,000. For black males in that age group, the national rate was 147 per 100,000, yet for black males aged 15-19 in Rochester, it was 264 per 100,000. And for black males aged 15-19 in the high-crime crescent, the homicide rate was 520 per 100,000, or 65 times the national rate. This means, nearly incredibly, that one in 200 young black men was killed in the "high crime crescent" every year.

Dr. Klofas then calculated the ripple effects of homicides in the "high crime crescent." Assuming that for each homicide victim, five friends were affected by that murder (a conservative assumption), Klofas calculated that 6.2% of the young African-American men in

[3] Rosenfeld, Richard and Brian Oliver. 2007. Evaluating recent changes in violent crime rates. Paper presented at the meeting of the Justice Research and Statistics Association, Pittsburgh, PA (October 12).

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those neighborhoods lost a friend to homicide each year. For the rest of Rochester, homicides affected only .1% of the population.[4]

Cincinnati, OH, provides a second illustration of the importance of looking below the national data. This city has long been plagued by high levels of violence. Last year, a group of police officials, public health officials, civic leaders and business representatives came together to launch CIRV, the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence. Prof. David Kennedy, Director of the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College, with colleagues from the University of Cincinnati, the research partner for CIRV, conducted an analysis of the patterns of homicide in Cincinnati. According to their analysis, 48 high-rate offending groups – drug crews, "gangs," and the like – with around 1100 members total were involved as offenders and/or victims in nearly three-quarters of the homicides in Cincinnati.[5]

The studies from Rochester and Cincinnati underscore three important points that are relevant to the deliberations of this Committee: (1) the phenomenon of violence in America is concentrated in a small number of neighborhoods; (2) a significant share of the violence is committed by, and against, a small number of young men living in those neighborhoods; (3) within these communities and subpopulations, the levels of violence are dramatically higher than the national experience – in Rochester, by a factor of 65. The national data about violence in America do not tell this story, but I believe this is the central story. If we want to produce a safer nation, advance an urban development agenda, and provide equal opportunities for Americans from minority groups, then we must bring these levels of violence down.

Recommendations for the new Administration and new Congress.

I am humbled by the opportunity to present my thoughts on new crime policies to be adopted by the incoming Administration and Congress, and I applaud this Committee for taking the initiative in paving the way. My recommendations fall into three categories: understanding the problem of violence in America; supporting proven interventions; and testing new ideas.

Understanding the Problem. Compared to virtually any other area of high policy interest in America, we have a very limited ability to track, analyze, and describe the phenomenon of violence. Our data from the Uniform Crime Reports are released months after the close of the year. Our National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is conducted annually, but only at a national level – statistically, it cannot capture the realities of crime at the local level -- and is always struggling for adequate appropriations from Congress. The Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program, which provides for quarterly interviews with individuals arrested and charged with crimes, has been cut back to ten cities from thirty-five, still far short of the goal

[4]Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) in Rochester, N.Y. John M. Klofas, Ph.D.; November 2007

[5]Engel, Robin, et al (2008) "Implementation of the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV): Year 1 Report (Updated)" University of Cincinnati Policing Institute, University of Cincinnati, April 14] Updated figures, personal communication, David M. Kennedy.

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of 75 established under the Clinton Administration. At the local level, police departments are making enormous strides to bring their reporting systems into the modern era, posting crime data on public websites, conducting geo-spatial analysis of crime reports, and using the internet to encourage crime reports, but at the national level we are still operating in a pre-internet, pre-GIS mindset.

The federal government should take the lead in designing and implementing a robust national crime data system that allows police executives, policy makers, elected officials, academics and other researchers, and community groups, to have a data-informed policy discussion about crime trends and effective responses.

Although the exact contours of such a program would necessarily depend on a process of design specification and consultation, I would suggest that such a program include, at a minimum:

- Rapid collection and dissemination of standardized police reporting data on crime, so that every month we would know whether crime rates were increasing or decreasing in every major jurisdiction across the country.
- Funding for annual local victimization surveys, using standardized survey designs, so that we could also track citizens' experiences of crime, independent of the police data. These victimization surveys should also include questions on citizen-police interactions, perceptions of fear, and attitudes toward the justice system, so that we know whether the agencies of our justice system are meeting citizens' expectations.
- Full funding of the ADAM system, expanding from the current 10 cities to at least 75 major cities, so that we can track changes in offender behavior, drug markets, illegal gun distribution, and gang dynamics.
- Funding of an analysis of gang dynamics, similar to that undertaken in Cincinnati, in those jurisdictions that are equipped to use that analysis to carry out the violence reduction strategies pioneered by Prof. Kennedy (see below).

Our goal should be to create a robust crime analysis capability at the national level, just as we have a national capability to understand fluctuations in unemployment rates, housing starts, or business cycles. As this statistical capacity is brought to scale, the federal government should significantly increase its investment in research to analyze the changing nature of crime in America, at the national, regional and local level. This robust analytical infrastructure would then provide the platform for the development of targeted violence-reduction strategies that focus federal, state and localattention and resources on the communities in America that are experiencing high rates, and increasing rates, of violence.

Supporting Proven Interventions. Over the past fourteen years, I have been particularly impressed by the violence reduction strategies pioneered by Prof. David Kennedy, formerly at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and now at John Jay College as Director of our Center on Crime Prevention and Control. When I was Director of the National Institute of Justice, we funded Prof. Kennedy's work developing a strategy called Operation Ceasefire, that led to the "Boston Miracle," a stunning two-thirds decline in youth homicide. By bringing together local, state and federal law enforcement with community leaders, clergy and service providers, Operation Ceasefire directly engaged the young people who were engaged in the violence, offered them a way out of their anti-social behavior, engaged the positive forces of the

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community in establishing new community norms, and promised and delivered formal law-enforcement sanctions where violence continued.

This strategy has since been replicated in dozens of jurisdictions across the country, with similar results. In Indianapolis, homicide was reduced by more than a third city-wide.[6] In Chicago, homicide was reduced by 37% in some of the most violent neighborhoods in the city.[7] Most recently, in Cincinnati, the CIRV initiative, previously mentioned, reduced homicide associated with violent groups by about half.

These strategies have earned national acclaim. The Boston Ceasefire model was awarded the prestigious Innovations Award by the Kennedy School of Government and the Ford Foundation. Under Attorney General Janet Reno, the Boston strategies were replicated in ten jurisdictions under the name of the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI). The national evaluation of SACSI, recently published by the Department of Justice, concluded that SACSI was "associated with reductions in targeted violent crimes, sometimes by as much as 50 percent."[8] Under the Bush Administration, these approaches were embraced by Project Safe Neighborhoods, a national anti-crime initiative.

Following these successes in reducing violence, Prof. Kennedy then applied a variant on these strategies to the issue of overt community drug markets, with similar successes. In High Point, NC, which was the first test site, and is represented here by Rev. Reverend James Summey of the English Road Baptist Church, the strategy shut down the worst drug market in the city virtually overnight more than four years ago, with a sustained neighborhood reduction in serious crime of more than 40%. As important, the African-American community in High Point, and other sites that replicated the High Point model, including Providence, RI, represented today by Colonel Esserman, has witnessed a more open, trusting and collaborative relationship between the African-American community and the police. The ABC news program "Primetime" recently highlighted a parallel intervention in a drug market in Hempstead, Long Island, which resulted in a 75% drop in serious crime; I have submitted a copy of that program with my written testimony.[9]

These proven innovations should be brought to national scale, with national leadership. The Boston Ceasefire and High Point strategies represent important breakthroughs because they

[6] Edmund F. McGarrell, Steven Chermak, Jeremy M. Wilson, and Nicholas Corsaro (2006) "Reducing Homicide through a Lever-Pulling Strategy" Justice Quarterly, 23 (2): 214–31.

[7] Andrew Papachristos, Tracey Meares, and Jeffrey Fagan (2007) "Attention Felons: Evaluating Project Safe Neighborhood in Chicago," University of Chicago, Department of Law and Economics, online working paper, No. 269. Available at http://ssrn.com/abstract = 860685]

[8] Roehl, Jan et al, (2008) "Paving the Way for Project Safe Neighborhoods: SACSI in 10 US Cities" Research in Brief, National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice, April.

[9] Copy of ABC News "Primetime" August 20, 2008 submitted to committee.

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focus directly on the most pressing manifestations of violence in our country in the communities that are most directly affected. Not surprisingly, there is enormous demand across the country for technical assistance and training in these strategies. I am pleased to note that Kennedy's drug market strategy has recently been embraced by the Justice Department under the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Drug Market Elimination Program (DMIP), and during the first week of July 2008, the Providence Police Department served as host for a BJA-sponsored training conference for 9 jurisdictions. Yet the demand for assistance far outstrips our capacity to meet the demand. And, more importantly, an approach that simply relies on a technical assistance model – working only with a small number of jurisdictions as expert consultants – fails to realize the enormous potential of these new approaches to violent crime.

Prof. Kennedy and I have developed a proposal for a "The National Safety Network" that would achieve four ambitious goals.[10] We believe it is possible to simultaneously reduce violence, abate drug markets, reduce our reliance on incarceration, and promote better relationships between the police and minority communities. Whether through this proposal or a variant, we should build upon this record of federally-supported innovation, with its strong evaluation results, and bring down rates of violence in communities that are suffering. Police agencies around the country are facing enormous pressures to respond to the levels of violence highlighted at this hearing. In my view, the federal government has an obligation to provide leadership in this area, as it has in the past, through targeted allocation of scarce federal dollars. Our highest priority should be to provide effective assistance to those communities facing the highest rates of violence.

Testing New Ideas. When I was Director of the National Institute of Justice, I invited Dr. James Q. Wilson to deliver a lecture on crime policy issues to a large, broadly representative audience of policy makers, researchers and practitioners. He chose as his topic, **"What, If Anything, Can the Federal Government Do About Crime?"** [11] His answer was instructive. The federal government's role in the arena of crime policy is necessarily limited, he argued, because law enforcement and criminal justice policy is so much the province of state and local government. But, he argued, the federal government should test new ideas, and help jurisdictions embrace those ideas with proven success. The federal government, he posited, should support the creation of a robust "Research and Development" capability for the nation.

We have many examples of successful federal leadership along these lines. The 1994 Crime Act developed with the leadership of this committee supported innovations in policing through the community policing initiative. It also promoted drug courts, new multi-sector responses to violence against women, advances in the use of DNA technology and other forensic science investigative techniques, crime mapping, and responses to sex offenders. At its best, the federal government tests new responses to critical and emerging problems facing the criminal justice

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[10] The National Safety Network: A National Strategy to Reduce Violence, Eliminate Drug Markets, and Promote Racial Reconciliation, (2008).

[11] Wilson, James Q, Ph.D. (1996), What, if Anything, Can the Federal Government Do About Crime?

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system, evaluates those new interventions rigorously, and then disseminates successful models for use by state and local agencies.

The crime and justice challenges facing the country today are enormous. In this statement, I have outlined an approach to a federal strategy for promoting public safety in communities facing unacceptable levels of violence. I also believe strongly that the federal government should show leadership by testing new approaches on a variety of other pressing topics. How can we reduce the recidivism rate and promote the successful reintegration of the 700,000 individuals leaving prison, and the 12 million people leaving local jails, each year? How can we reduce the incidence of identity theft, which strikes millions of Americans each year? How can we reduce our reliance on incarceration, without sacrificing public safety, so that those resources can be redirected to communities experiencing high rates of crime? How can we improve our response to crime victims, so that they can rebuild their lives after the devastation of crime? How can we reduce the levels of violence against women, and the tragedy of abuse and neglect of children? How can we improve the level of trust and confidence in the justice system and the rule of law, particularly in communities of color that suffer the triple impact of high crime, high incarceration, and high rates of prisoner reentry? Bringing down rates of violence is clearly the top priority for the nation, but these other challenges are compelling, and also require national leadership.

I thank the Committee for the invitation to present these thoughts, and would be eager to provide further assistance if called upon.

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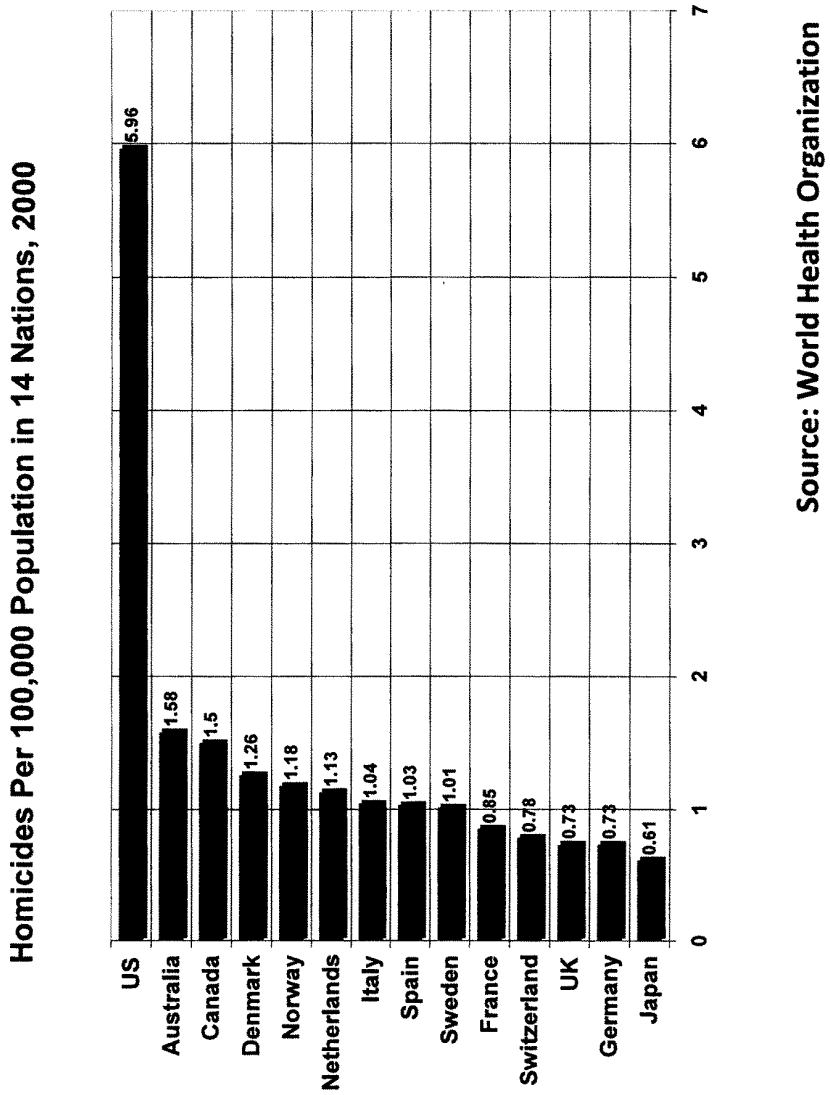
Homicides Per 100,000 Population in 14 Nations, 2000
US
Australia
Canada
Denmark
Norway
Netherlands
Italy
Spain
Sweden
France
Switzerland
UK
Germany
Japan
5.96
1.58
1.5
1.26
1.18
1.13
1.04
1.03
1.01
0.85
0.78
0.73
0.73
0.61
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Source: World Health Organization