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LESSONS LEARNED: AN EXAMINATION OF MAJOR SECURITY INCIDENTS AT MASS GATHERING EVENTS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

TASK FORCE ON ENHANCING SECURITY FOR SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

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CONTENTS

Page

STATEMENTS

The Honorable Michael T. McCaul, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas, and Chairman, Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States:
Oral Statement 1
Prepared Statement 3
The Honorable Nellie Pou, a Representative in Congress From the State of New Jersey, and Ranking Member, Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States:
Oral Statement 4
Prepared Statement 5
The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson, a Representative in Congress From the State of Mississippi, and Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security:
Prepared Statement 6

WITNESSES

Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz, Sheriff, Miami-Dade County, Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office:
Oral Statement 8
Prepared Statement 10
Mr. Edward F. Davis, III, President and CEO, The Edward Davis Company; Former Police Commissioner, Boston Police Department:
Oral Statement 11
Prepared Statement 14
Colonel Robert P. Hodges, Superintendent, Louisiana State Police:
Oral Statement 17
Prepared Statement 19
Chief Stacey Graves, Police Chief, Kansas City Missouri Police Department:
Oral Statement 20
Prepared Statement 22

LESSONS LEARNED: AN EXAMINATION OF MAJOR SECURITY INCIDENTS AT MASS GATHERING EVENTS

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
TASK FORCE ON ENHANCING SECURITY FOR SPECIAL EVENTS
IN THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:04 p.m., in room 310, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Michael T. McCaul [Chairman of the Task Force] presiding.

Present: Representatives McCaul, Gimenez, Crane, Pou, and Swalwell.

Present: Representative Carter.

Mr. MCCAUL. The Committee on Homeland Security Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States will come to order. Without objection, the Chair may declare the committee in recess at any point.

The purpose of this hearing is to assess historical incidents and attacks at sporting events and other mass gatherings in anticipation of upcoming high-profile international events that the United States will be hosting.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

I would like to welcome everyone to this inaugural hearing of the bipartisan House Committee on Homeland Security's Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States. In the coming decade, the United States will host millions of international travelers for several major national and international special events, including the FIFA World Cup, the celebration of the United States' 250th birthday in 2026, and the Los Angeles Summer Olympics of 2028. Though these events present an opportunity to showcase everything that makes America great, we cannot forget that our adversaries and other violent extremists will view these events as targets for inflicting mass casualties and generating fear. To that end, I am honored to chair the task force and lead the committee's efforts in investigating and conducting oversight of the security needs of these major national and international events.

Our goal is to develop and advance legislative solutions that will enhance our preparedness and security posture against all threats. I look forward to working with the Ranking Member of the task force, Ms. Nellie Pou of New Jersey, and with all the Members as-

signed to this task force to empower State and local law enforcement and other first responders to carry out their missions.

As we prepare to secure the major events ahead, this task force must begin by learning from past failures, both here and abroad. In the United States, we have seen deadly attacks at mass gatherings: the 1996 Olympic bombing in Atlanta and the 2025 New Year's Day attack in New Orleans. Abroad, the 1972 Munich Olympics, which are still emblazoned in my mind, saw terrorists murder 9—or, sorry, 11—Israeli athletes after exploiting security gaps. In addition, in 2015, ISIS launched coordinated attacks across Paris, killing 130. These tragedies make clear the cost of complacency and we owe it to the American people to confront these lessons and ensure we don't repeat them. This hearing is the first step.

Today's historic focus will lead us to discuss and consider like the instance of vehicular terrorism on January 1 this year in New Orleans, the crowd security breach at the Copa America final game at the Miami Hard Rock Stadium last year, and the Kansas City parade shooting early last year. We will also discuss the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, which occurred during my tenure as Chairman of this committee.

Commissioner Davis, it is great to see you again. We worked well together in our oversight and investigating the activities following that tragedy to find a constructive outcome so that something like that couldn't happen again.

So we look forward to hearing from our witnesses on these challenges, what we can do better. More importantly, we want to know what more Congress and the Federal Government can do to strengthen security ahead of these major events.

One clear lesson from the past attacks is the need for strong intelligence sharing. Our State and local law enforcement rely on timely information from the Federal intelligence community, especially our fusion centers. With rising tensions in the Middle East and the threat of Iran-backed actors operating inside the United States, raising awareness and coordination is critical to stopping potential attacks before they happen.

Earlier this month, Congress passed and the President signed into law supplemental funding for the World Cup and the Los Angeles Olympics, which will be used in part to enhance information sharing. That same information sharing is critical in stopping human trafficking, which we see, unfortunately, all too well at these events.

With millions of international visitors expected, criminal networks will look to exploit. We also face a growing threat from drones. According to the NFL, there are over 2,800 drone incursions at stadiums during the 2023 season, a 4,000 percent increase from just 5 years prior. With minimal skill, bad actors can use these drones to launch attacks or create chaos. Yet most State and local agencies lack the authority to respond. We need to equip Federal agencies so they can help the State agencies and close the gap to make these events safe.

We have lots of work to do ahead of these events. Hope this hearing is a strong first step to ensure the incidents we discussed today will never happen again. The United States remains a global leader

in providing safe and secure experiences for citizens and visitors alike.

[The statement of Chairman McCaul follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

JULY 22, 2025

Welcome, everyone, to this inaugural hearing of the bipartisan House Committee on Homeland Security's Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States. In the coming decade, the United States will host millions of international travelers for several major national and international special events, including the FIFA World Cup, celebration of the United States' 250th birthday in 2026, and the Los Angeles Summer Olympics 2028.

Though these events present an opportunity to showcase everything that makes America great, we cannot forget that our adversaries and other violent extremists will view these events as targets for inflicting mass casualties and generating fear. To that end, I am honored to chair this Task Force and lead the committee's efforts in investigating and conducting oversight of the security needs of these major national and international special events. Our goal is to develop and advance legislative solutions that will enhance our preparedness and security posture against all threats.

I look forward to working with the Ranking Member of this Task Force, Ms. Nellie Pou of New Jersey, and with all the Members assigned to this Task Force to empower State and local law enforcement and other first responders to carry out their missions for these events.

As we prepare to secure the major events ahead, this Task Force must begin by learning from past failures—both here at home and abroad. In the United States, we've seen deadly attacks at mass gatherings: the 1996 Olympic bombing in Atlanta and the 2025 New Year's Day terrorist attack in New Orleans. Abroad, the 1972 Munich Olympics saw terrorists murder 11 Israeli athletes after exploiting security gaps. In 2015, ISIS launched coordinated attacks across Paris, killing 130.

These tragedies make clear the cost of complacency. We owe it to the American people to confront these lessons and ensure we don't repeat them. This hearing is the first step.

Today's historical focus will lead us to discuss and consider events like the instance of vehicular terrorism on January 1 of this year in New Orleans, the crowd security breach at the Copa América final game at Miami Hard Rock Stadium last year, and the Kansas City parade shooting early last year.

We will also discuss the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, which occurred during my tenure as Chairman of this committee. I was heavily involved in organizing this committee's oversight and investigative activities following that tragedy.

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses on the challenges they faced, how coordination and response can be improved, and how their agencies have adapted to prevent future attacks. Most importantly, we want to know what more Congress and the Federal Government can do to strengthen security ahead of major events.

One clear lesson from past attacks is the need for strong intelligence sharing. Our State and local law enforcement rely on timely information from the Federal intelligence community, especially through our fusion centers. With rising tensions in the Middle East, and the threat of Iran-backed actors operating inside the United States, raising awareness and coordination is critical to stopping potential attacks before they happen.

Earlier this month, Congress passed, and the President signed into law, supplemental funding for the World Cup and the Los Angeles Olympics, which will be used in part to enhance the information-sharing environment. That same information sharing is critical in stopping human trafficking. With millions of international visitors expected, criminal networks will look to exploit the crowds.

We also face a growing threat from drones. According to the NFL, there were over 2,800 drone incursions at stadiums during the 2023 season—a 4,000-percent increase from just 5 years prior. With minimal skill, bad actors can use these drones to launch attacks or create chaos. Yet most State and local agencies lack the authority to respond. We need to equip Federal agencies and close the gap to keep these events safe.

There is still much work to do to secure our homeland ahead of these special events. I hope this hearing is a strong first step in ensuring we discuss today never happen again, and that the United States remains a global leader in providing safe and secure experiences for citizens and visitors alike.

Mr. MCCAUL. With that, I now recognize the Ranking Member of the task force, Ms. Pou, for her opening statement.

Ms. POU. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman. Good afternoon to you, sir. I am so very pleased to be leading this, our bipartisan task force with you today for our first hearing.

Before I start, I want to express my deepest sympathy to the victims of the attack in Los Angeles over the weekend. I pray for everyone's recovery. This tragedy, which injured more than 30 people, demonstrates how important it is for law enforcement to have plans in place to prevent, mitigate, and respond to threats, including threats that may arise outside of venues.

This task force has a deeply important mission as our country prepares to host some of the world's largest gatherings and celebration over the next 3 years, events like the 250th anniversary of America's founding, the 78 matches of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games will put American hospitality on display for the world to see. I am so excited that the final match of the 2026 World Cup will be held in Bergen County, in my district, and our Fan Festival will be right down the road at the Liberty State Park.

Congress and the Executive branch must be ready to roll out the red carpet and ensure that our State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners have the resources they need to ensure the safety, security and success of these mass gatherings. As we go forward, we must keep in mind that it is not just stadiums and parking lots we need to protect. It is fan festivals, entertainment districts, bars, gathering spaces where people will be gathering to celebrate.

I want to thank our witnesses for testifying. Each of you has an important perspective on lessons learned as we examine past security incidents at mass gathering events. At the 2013 Boston Marathon, terrorists detonated homemade bombs. Three died and over 500 were injured.

In February 2024, the Kansas City Chiefs won the Super Bowl and the city turned out for a massive celebration and parade. Sadly, after the parade, 2 men began arguing and shot at each other. Within minutes more shots were fired and 1 person was killed and more than 20 people were injured.

During the 2024 Copa America finals in Florida, thousands of fans without tickets crashed the gate, jumped the barriers, and entered the stadium, bypassing the security and police.

We all were devastated this year when a terrorist rented a pick-up truck and rammed through a crowd on Bourbon Street, killing 14 people and injuring dozens. Our committee traveled to New Orleans to hear directly from those involved in the response.

Today's witnesses are law enforcement officers who face these tragic events and they are here to help us apply the lessons they have learned to the hundreds of mass gathering events that will unfold over the next 3 years. But we also want to take a look forward and hear about what State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners need from us to prepare for the America 250 celebrations, the 2026 first FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Two of our witnesses today will play leading roles in the securing FIFA World Cup matches next year.

Before closing, I want to just point out that while our cities prepare for these amazing, wonderful celebrations of sports and global fellowship, I think it is important for me to share that, you know, unfortunately, the administration has cut, frozen, or slowed disbursement of DHS and FEMA grants to help cities address terrorism as well as regional preparedness. Cities and State needed that money absolutely now, yesterday. I hope to hear from our witnesses how grants like the State Homeland Security Program and Urban Areas Security Initiatives keep Americans safe at mass gathering events.

I am also worried that the administration's treatment of immigrants have sent a message to the world that you are not welcome here. Tourism is already down across the country and our State and local economies are suffering. If the administration's visa policies keep people from traveling to the United States for the World Cup or Olympics, our communities will indeed suffer. That is really bad policy and bad economics.

Mr. Chairman, I truly look forward to working with you to make sure that our communities and law enforcement get everything that they need and that they are able to get that soon.

I would also, Mr. Chairman, would ask a unanimous his consent that the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Carter, be permitted to sit with the task force and question today's witnesses.

Mr. MCCAUL. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. POU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With that, I yield back.

[The statement of Ranking Member Pou follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER NELLIE POU

JULY 22, 2025

I want to express my deepest sympathy to the victims of the attack in Los Angeles over the weekend. I pray for everyone's recovery. This tragedy—which injured more than 30 people—demonstrates how important it is for law enforcement to have plans in place to prevent, mitigate, and respond to threats, including threats that may arise outside of venues.

This Task Force has a deeply important mission as our country prepares to host some of the world's largest gatherings and celebrations over the next 3 years. Events like the 250th Anniversary of America's Founding, the 78 matches of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games will put American hospitality on display for the world to see. I am so excited that the final match of the 2026 World Cup will be held in Bergen County in my district. Our Fan Festival will be right down the road at Liberty State Park.

Congress and the Executive branch must be ready to roll out the red carpet and ensure our State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners have the resources they need to ensure the safety, security, and success of these mass gatherings. And as we go forward, we must keep in mind that it's not just stadiums and parking lots we need to protect—it's fan festivals, entertainment districts, bars, and gathering spaces where people will be celebrating. I want to thank our witnesses for testifying. Each of you has an important perspective on lessons learned as we examine past security incidents at mass gathering events.

At the 2013 Boston Marathon, terrorists detonated homemade bombs. Three died and over 500 were injured. in February 2024, the Kansas City Chiefs won the Super Bowl, and the city turned out for a massive celebration and parade. Sadly, after the parade, 2 men began arguing and shot at each other. Within minutes, more shots were fired, 1 person was killed, and more than 20 people were injured. During the 2024 Copa America final in Florida, thousands of fans without tickets crashed the gates, jumped barriers, and entered the stadium—bypassing security and police. And we all were devastated this year when a terrorist rented a pickup truck and rammed through a crowd on Bourbon Street, killing 14 people and injuring dozens. Our committee traveled to New Orleans to hear directly from those involved in the response.

Today's witnesses are law enforcement officers who faced these tragic events, and they are here to help us apply the lessons they learned to the hundreds of mass gathering events that will unfold over the next 3 years. But we also want to take a look forward and hear about what State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners need from us to prepare for the America 250 celebrations, 2026 FIFA World Cup, and 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Two of our witnesses today will play leading roles in securing FIFA World Cup Matches next year.

Before closing, I want to point out that while our cities prepare for these wonderful celebrations of sport and global fellowship, the administration has cut, frozen, and slowed disbursement of DHS and FEMA grants that help cities address terrorism and regional preparedness. Cities and States needed that money yesterday.

I hope to hear from our witnesses how grants like the State Homeland Security Program and Urban Area Security Initiative keep Americans safe at mass gathering events. I am also worried that the administration's treatment of immigrants has sent a message to the world that "You are not welcome here." Tourism is already down across the country, and our State and local economies are suffering.

If the administration's visa policies keep people from traveling to the United States for the World Cup or Olympics, our communities will suffer. That's bad policy and bad economics.

Mr. MCCAUL. I thank Ranking Member Pou. Other Members of the task force are reminded that opening statements may be submitted for the record.

[The statement of Ranking Member Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON

JULY 22, 2025

The United States will soon host some of the world's largest sporting events and gatherings—the 2026 World Cup, 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and America 250 celebrations. I thank my colleagues, Michael McCaul and Nellie Pou, for spearheading the committee's Task Force to help ensure our stadiums, arenas, and other venues are secure.

To protect the thousands of athletes, fans, and attendees, Federal agencies must closely collaborate with State and local partners, and Congress must provide first responders with the resources they require. Mass gathering events are attractive targets, including for bad actors who wish to inflict mass casualties to further their cause.

Our witnesses today know all too well the tragedy that can unfold in a matter of seconds. Mr. Edward Davis is testifying today. He worked closely with Congress during the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing that killed 3 and injured hundreds. Also testifying today is a representative of the Louisiana State Police. On New Year's Day, a vehicle-ramming attack took 14 innocent lives in New Orleans, and 2 police officers were shot. And Miami-Dade County, where Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz is the top law enforcement officer, hosted last year's Copa America soccer final, at which thousands of fans without tickets stormed the stadium and overcame security and police.

While we continue to face domestic terrorism threats inspired by foreign actors, we cannot lose focus on ensuring mass gatherings are protected from gun violence. Police Chief Stacey Graves oversaw the response to the mass shooting during the Kansas City Super Bowl parade in 2024, in which a personal dispute left 1 dead and more than 20 people injured. The persistent threat of gun violence in this country poses a significant public safety challenge, particularly around special events that will draw tens of thousands of spectators. This year alone, there have been at least 231 mass shooting events in the United States, leaving 175 people dead. We must do more than offer our thoughts and prayers.

Today's witnesses can teach us how to apply the lessons learned from these past security incidents to future events. We must also consider emerging threats, including drones. Drones, often a disruptive nuisance at sporting events, can be altered to deliver a deadly payload.

Last Congress, I cosponsored bipartisan legislation, H.R. 8610, the Counter-UAS Authority, Security, Safety, and Reauthorization Act, that would have extended and expanded counter-drone authorities, including by establishing a pilot program for State and local law enforcement agencies to receive drone mitigation authorities. House Republican leadership never called the bill up for floor consideration. Congress must act now to provide enhanced authorities to counter the increasing prevalence of drones.

It is also critical that Federal preparedness grants—which fund everything from emergency planning and training to equipment and exercises—are disbursed as required by law. President Trump and Secretary Noem have frozen grant funding Congress provided for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), and the Securing the Cities (STC) program. Law enforcement and first responders that help protect us all are counting on the Trump administration to follow the law and get this desperately-needed funding to communities across America.

Ensuring that mass gathering events are secure from all threats, including terrorism, drones, and gun violence requires a whole-of-Government approach. Democratic Members stand at the ready to provide a welcoming and safe environment for all who attend major events.

Mr. MCCAUL. I am pleased to have such an important panel of witnesses before us today and ask the witnesses, please rise and raise their right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you. Please be seated. Let the record reflect the witnesses have answered in the affirmative.

We have several witnesses. First, Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz serves as the sheriff for Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office. Since her election on January 7, 2025, Sheriff Cordero-Stutz has dedicated over 29 years to law enforcement profession.

Second, Mr. Ed Davis, present CEO of the Edward Davis Company. Don't want to put you on the spot. He has been in law enforcement for 35 years. Served as a police commissioner of the city of Boston from December 2006 until October 2013. Mr. Davis led the highly successful response to the Boston Marathon bombing. The second month I was sworn in as Chairman of this committee. It is quite an honor, sir, to see you back in the same hearing room where we, I think, working together accomplished a great deal to make this country safer. Thank you, sir.

Colonel Robert Hodges is superintendent for the Louisiana State Police. On January 8, 2024, he was appointed as the 27th superintendent of the Louisiana State Police. He has 30 years with the Louisiana State Police and briefly served as an intelligence officer in the Louisiana Army National Guard Reserve.

To our last witness, I would like to yield to Emanuel Cleaver to introduce the witness from his great State of Missouri.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Pou, it is a pleasure for me to introduce our illustrious police chief. Chief Stacey Graves, a lifelong resident of Kansas City, Missouri, began her career at the KCPD in 1997 as a civilian records clerk. After joining the Police Academy in December 1997, she had multiple assignments as a police officer, including various divisions of that department.

She has unique credentials to assume this position. On December 15, 2022, 25 years after starting her police career at the Academy, she was selected to be the police chief of Kansas City, Missouri. At age 48, Graves became the 48th police chief in Kansas City, Missouri's 148-year history. It is a pleasure for me to present my police chief, the police chief of Kansas City, Missouri, including the Super Bowl-bound Kansas City Chiefs, Chief Graves.

Mr. MCCAUL. That is very well done. Thank you.

I now recognize Sheriff Cordero-Stutz for 5 minutes to summarize her opening statement.

STATEMENT OF SHERIFF ROSIE CORDERO-STUTZ, SHERIFF, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, MIAMI-DADE SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and Members of the House Homeland Security Task Force on Special Events. I would also like to acknowledge the representative of my home town, Congressman Carlos Gimenez. Congressman, is always nice to see you.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this task force and provide a detailed analysis of the lessons learned from Copa America and the ways in which we have reassessed and put into motion advanced safety protocols in preparation for future high-profile events such as FIFA 2026. While it is appropriate to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of the event, it is equally incumbent upon us to acknowledge the inherent challenges we encountered during Copa America. Foremost among the lessons learned is the critical importance of meticulous early stage planning, including comprehensive scenario-based drills.

Equally vital is the development of robust mitigation strategies that prioritize crowd dynamics, layered security parameters—correction perimeters, agile deployment forces, event-based intelligence gathering, and seamless interagency collaboration at the local, national, and international levels. During Copa America stadium personnel alongside members of the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office faced considerable operational challenges stemming from a large influx of individuals at the stadium premises. The crowd demonstrated persistent attempts to breach established security measures in an effort to gain entry. The existing single gate entry system was inadequate for efficiently managing the volume of attendees. Notably, many individuals present did not possess tickets, but still attempted to access the sold-out event.

Due to the density of people at entry points, it was difficult for deputies, security staff, and other law enforcement agencies to accurately distinguish ticketed guests from those without tickets and no procedures were in place for the removal of unauthorized individuals. To address these challenges, a three-tiered entry protocol has since been adopted to ensure early identification and preemptive removal of individuals without valid credentials, thereby alleviating pressure at main entry points. Each tier focus—each tier features a screening process that mandates attendees to present valid admission tickets. This approach enables the effective identification of removal of individuals without tickets prior to their arrival at the main gate. Further security enhancements include reinforced barriers and specialized fencing within the inner perimeter, providing an additional layer of deterrence against unauthorized access.

Staffing at each checkpoint has been increased with both private security personnel and MDSO staff, deployed to ensure the efficient management of large crowds. The strategic placement of specially-trained deputies throughout the stadium has proven effective in overseeing large and potentially volatile crowds. These officers serve as a significant deterrent and are prepared to effectively manage complex scenarios.

During recent FIFA Club World Cup events, Rapid Deployment Force, or RDF, personnel were assigned to critical areas, success-

fully addressing unruly spectators and ensuring comprehensive security around the stadium perimeter. The initial event preparations involved gathering baseline data. However, this information proved insufficient for supplying stakeholders with actionable insight. As a result, an enhanced methodology has been implemented incorporating crowd behavior monitoring, social media analysis, and threat identification. This comprehensive approach empowers key stakeholders to make timely and well-informed decisions.

At this time, I would like to present an overview of the strategies and safety protocols being implemented and evaluated in preparation for the future high-level event, particularly FIFA 2026. For example, the adoption of an integrated communication system is essential. Real-time synchronized communication among all stakeholders, including law enforcement, emergency response services, event organizers, and local authorities ensure seamless information flow and coordinated responses. Additionally, transparent communication with the public is crucial for fostering trust and encouraging compliance with safety protocols.

Empowering qualified volunteers and personnel through comprehensive training programs is also a key priority. Regular drills and scenario-based exercises equip staff with the necessary skills to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies, suspicious activities, and guest assistance needs. It is equally important to ensure that venues and communications are accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities and from diverse cultural backgrounds. Employing multilingual law enforcement agents, both overt and covert, further supports effective crowd management and engagement.

A healthy budget is fundamental to ensuring the highest level of safety at major events. Adequate funding is required for additional deputies, overtime, and investment in advanced technologies which will enable rapid response capabilities and reinforce MDSO's commitment to safety.

The establishment of centralized command centers throughout the venues is critical for the coordination of resources information sharing and decision making during the large-scale events. Command centers serve as operational hubs, enabling authorities to monitor situations in real time and deploy resources where needed most efficiently.

Community engagement and an educational outreach prior to high-level events are also vital to the overall efforts. Information campaigns through op-ed pieces, videos, and other media will educate both locals and guests about safety protocols, emergency procedures, and available resources, enhancing the preparedness and promoting a culture of safety throughout the host community and beyond.

Before closing, I would like to underscore one final point. The Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office is committed to public safety. While we recognize and appreciate the partnership between event organizers, vendors, and sponsors for large community events, their operational cost and projected revenues should not override or minimize the importance of public safety considerations. MDSO maintains sole authority over personnel deployment and resource allocation for these large-scale events.

In conclusion, the World Cup served as a pivotal event, offering valuable insight, experience, and lessons learned. A thorough analysis of areas for enhancement has strengthened MDSO's approach to safety and security for forthcoming major events. By embracing technology advancement, fostering interagency cooperation, and implementing a comprehensive training program, we maintain—we remain committed to the ensuring of a secure and successful, exceptional experience for all the participants of FIFA 2026. We should move forward with collective responsibility and vigilance to ensure that FIFA and other international events hosted by Miami-Dade County exemplify both the celebration of the achievement and the higher standards of safety, unity, and resilience.

I thank you for your attention and I'm available to answer any questions or receive recommendations.

[The prepared statement of Sheriff Cordero-Stutz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROSIE CORDERO-STUTZ

JULY 22, 2025

Good afternoon, Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and Members of the House Homeland Security Task Force on Special Events. I would also like to acknowledge the representative from my home town, Congressman Carlos Gimenez. Congressman always so nice to see you.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this task force and provide a detailed analysis of the lessons learned from Copa America, and the ways in which we have reassessed and put into motion advanced safety protocols in preparation for future high-profile events such as FIFA 2026.

While it is appropriate to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of the event, it is equally incumbent upon us to acknowledge the inherent challenges we encountered during Copa America. Foremost among the lessons learned is the critical importance of meticulous, early-stage planning including comprehensive scenario-based drills. Equally vital is the development of robust mitigation strategies that prioritize crowd dynamics, layered security perimeters, agile deployment forces, event-based intelligence gathering, and seamless interagency collaboration at local, national, and international levels.

During World Copa, stadium personnel, alongside members of the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office, faced considerable operational challenges stemming from a large influx of individuals at the stadium premises. The crowd demonstrated persistent attempts to breach established security measures in an effort to gain entry. The existing single gate entry system was inadequate for efficiently managing the volume of attendees. Notably, many individuals present did not possess tickets but still attempted to access the sold-out event. Due to the density of people at entry points, it was difficult for deputies, security staff, and other law enforcement agencies to accurately distinguish ticketed guests from those without tickets, and no procedures were in place for the removal of unauthorized individuals.

To address these challenges, a 3-tiered entry protocol has since been adopted to ensure early identification and preemptive removal of individuals without valid credentials, thereby alleviating pressure at main entry points. Each tier features a screening process that mandates attendees to present valid admission tickets. This approach enables the effective identification and removal of individuals without tickets prior to their arrival at the main entrance. Further security enhancements include reinforced barriers and specialized fencing within the inner perimeter, providing an additional layer of deterrence against unauthorized access. Staffing at each checkpoint has been increased, with both private security personnel and MDSO staff deployed to ensure the efficient management of large crowds.

The strategic placement of specially-trained deputies throughout the stadium has proven effective in overseeing large and potentially volatile crowds. These officers serve as a significant deterrent and are prepared to effectively manage complex scenarios. During recent FIFA Club World Cup events, Rapid Deployment Force personnel were assigned to critical areas, successfully addressing unruly spectators, and ensuring comprehensive security around the stadium perimeter.

The initial event preparations involved gathering baseline data; however, this information proved insufficient for supplying stakeholders with actionable insights. As

a result, an enhanced methodology has been implemented, incorporating crowd behavior monitoring, social media analysis, and threat identification. This comprehensive approach empowers key stakeholders to make timely and well-informed decisions.

At this time, I would like to present an overview of the strategies and safety protocols being implemented and evaluated in preparation for future high-level events such as FIFA 2026. For example, the adoption of integrated communication systems is essential. Real-time, synchronized communication among all stakeholders including law enforcement, emergency response services, event organizers, and local authorities ensures seamless information flow and coordinated responses. Additionally, transparent communication with the public is crucial for fostering trust and encouraging compliance with safety protocols.

Empowering qualified volunteers and personnel through comprehensive training programs is also a key priority. Regular drills and scenario-based exercises equip staff with the necessary skills to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies, suspicious activities, and guest assistance needs. It is equally important to ensure that venues and communications are accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities and from diverse cultural backgrounds. Employing multilingual law enforcement agents, both overt and covert, further supports effective crowd management and engagement.

A healthy budget is fundamental to ensuring the highest level of safety at major events. Adequate funding is required for additional deputies, overtime, and investment in advanced technologies which will enable rapid response capabilities and reinforce MDSO's commitment to safety.

The establishment of centralized command centers throughout the venues is critical for the coordination of resources, information sharing, and decision making during large-scale events. Command centers serve as operational hubs, enabling authorities to monitor situations in real time and deploy resources where needed most efficiently.

Community engagement and educational outreach prior to high-level events are vital to overall safety efforts. Informative campaigns through op-ed pieces, videos, and other media will educate both locals and guests about safety protocols, emergency procedures, and available resources, thereby enhancing preparedness and promoting a culture of safety throughout the host community and beyond. Before closing, I would like to underscore one final point. The Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office is committed to public safety. While we recognize and appreciate the partnership between event organizers, vendors, and sponsors for large community events; their operational costs and projected revenues should NOT override or minimize the importance of public safety considerations. MDSO maintains sole authority over personnel deployment and resource allocation for these large-scale events.

In conclusion, the World Copa served as a pivotal event, offering valuable insights, experiences, and lessons learned. A thorough analysis of areas for enhancement has strengthened MDSO's approach to safety and security for forthcoming major events. By embracing technological advancements, fostering interagency cooperation, and implementing comprehensive training, we remain committed to ensuring a secure and exceptional experience for all participants at FIFA 2026.

We should move forward with collective responsibility and vigilance to ensure that FIFA and other international events hosted by Miami Dade County exemplify both the celebration of achievement and the highest standards of safety, unity, and resilience.

Thank you for your attention. I am available to answer any questions or receive recommendations.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Sheriff.

I now recognize Mr. Davis for 5 minutes for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF EDWARD F. DAVIS, III, PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE EDWARD DAVIS COMPANY; FORMER POLICE COMMISSIONER, BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. DAVIS. Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and distinguished Members of the Task Force, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing and to contribute to this important discussion with these distinguished police leaders on

how the lessons learned in the 12 years since the Boston Marathon bombings can help drive meaningful security advancements.

As the United States prepares for a series of major upcoming special events, including the FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, it is critical that we apply those lessons to strengthen our collective preparedness, incorporating advancements in intelligence and technology, enhancing interagency coordination, and ensuring the safety of all who participate.

The tragic events of the 2013 Boston Marathon, a terrorist bombing that claimed the lives of Lyu Lingzi, Krystle Campbell, and Martin Richard, Officer Sean Collier, and Dennis Simmonds, and left hundreds injured and maimed, forever changed the city of Boston. The response to the attack demonstrated that effective preparedness depends not only on planning, but also on seamless collaboration and the critical importance of intelligence cooperation across all levels of law enforcement agencies and first responders. This integrated effort was instrumental in the successful identification and apprehension of the suspects.

The Boston Regional Intelligence Fusion Center, the BRIC, served as a central hub for intelligence gathering during and after the attack. As one of the intelligence sharing nodes established by the Department of Homeland Security, the BRIC underscored the value of integrated intelligence operations and led to broader national investments in fusion center capabilities. This highlighted their role as force multipliers in complex emergencies by breaking down agency silos, but actively seeking out what is unknown through cooperative efforts across jurisdictions.

Equally important is how that information is communicated, as intelligence is only as effective as the clarity, content, and timeliness with which it is received. This mindset starts with leadership. The tone set by the boss matters because what their leaders say, the officers respond to. BRIC's intelligence response was swift in Boston. It allowed us to capture the terrorists in 4 days' time.

Another tool exemplifying the benefits of integrated coordination is the Department of Homeland Security Special Event Assessment, or SEAR, rating. SEAR ratings are voluntarily submitted for special events, which are sent to DHS Office of Operations Coordination by State, local, and Federal officials for an overall risk assessment. This intelligence is critical for on the ground security planning and resources. The SEAR rating is currently effective, but needs prioritization as the United States prepares to host upcoming global events such as the World Cup and the Olympic Games.

As I previously testified for this committee during the Boston Marathon, the overwhelming number of phone calls, texts, and internet searches rendered voice communications practically useless for everyone, including the police officers on the scene and those responding. Local and Federal law enforcement were impeded and change was critically important. The goal of the group, named FirstNet, is to provide law enforcement of first responders with the ability to access a highly secure and completely reliable service network during times when commercial service becomes overwhelmed, exactly when it is needed most. The system works. The partnership works for first responders.

Another aspect of technology has seen significant improvement is AI capabilities for video and photo surveillance. This is both good and bad, Mr. Chairman. The AI abilities of the police to analyze this data, which took us days in the Boston Marathon situation, has been greatly improved. So those days are now ours instead. But AI also presents a challenge of deep fakes and other issues where the malicious actors can use this information to sow unrest and lack of trust in these events. This is one of the main priorities I think we need to face at this time.

As was published in a white paper that I helped pen for the National Institute of Justice's Harvard Executive Session on Policing and Public Safety in March 2014, the Boston Police Department successfully used Twitter to establish a two-way dialog with the public about the status of investigations, to calm nerves, and request assistance to correct mistaken information reported by the press, and to ask for restraint from the public tweeting of information from police scanners. This demonstrated the level of trust and interaction that a department and community can attain on-line.

Cyber attacks have emerged as a sophisticated and escalating threat to major sporting events. A conversation with Cathy Lanier recently, the head of security for the NFL, indicates that cyber is high on her list of priorities as these events continue on.

As technology evolves one of the main threats I see out there is first person view drones. My company works at stadiums across the country helping secure. First-person view drones are an increasing concern at major public venues. The biggest innovation in warfare in decades, FPV drones represent a transformative shift in how aerial threats are deployed, blending low-cost accessibility with high-impact potential. Unlike conventional, GPS-stabilized drones, FPV drones are manually piloted, maneuverable, and capable of streaming real-time video to operators. They make it incredibly difficult to thwart these efforts.

Although several promising technologies exist, including jamming systems that can intercept and disable drones, these technologies are expensive and not readily available outside. The colonel is on the cutting edge of this technology. I'll let him continue the conversation about the drones.

As the United States prepares to host a series of events, the threat landscape has evolved significantly. Extremist-driven acts of violence, foreign influence operations, and ideologically-motivated terrorists, both domestic and international, have surged across the country.

In closing, while advancements have created a better environment for law enforcement agencies to respond to crime, the risk of danger and sacrifice that police throughout our Nation face should not be underestimated. As new technology becomes available to law enforcement, it becomes available to criminals and terrorists. New threats, both physical and cyber, emerge daily, especially those related to drone technology and advancement. Police will continue to adapt and overcome, but it is critical to ensure a coordinated effort for detection and avoidance is in place.

I want to extend my gratitude to our law enforcement and intelligence community partners for their unwavering commitment to protecting our Nation. I thank you and this task force for the op-

portunity to reflect on the hard-won lessons since the Boston Marathon tragedy 12 years ago and to consider how we can apply them moving forward. As the United States prepares to take center stage by hosting these events, we have a unique opportunity to demonstrate leadership, resilience, and innovation in public safety on a global scale.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Davis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EDWARD F. DAVIS, III

JULY 22, 2025

Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and distinguished Members of the task force, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing and to contribute to this important discussion on how the lessons learned in the 12 years since the Boston Marathon bombings can help drive meaningful security advancements as the United States prepares for a series of major upcoming special events—including the FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It is critical that we apply those lessons to strengthen our collective preparedness, incorporating advancements in intelligence and technology, enhancing interagency coordination, and ensuring the safety of all who participate.

The tragic events of the 2013 Boston Marathon—a terrorist bombing that claimed the lives of Lu Lingzi, Krystle Campbell, Martin Richard, Officers Sean Collier and Dennis Simmonds, and left hundreds injured, forever changed the city of Boston. While the impact of that day will never be forgotten, the collective response has served as a catalyst for transformation. This incident reshaped how law enforcement, public officials, the media, and the broader community prepare for and respond to major emergencies. It highlighted the critical importance of interagency coordination and real-time communication strategies. The lessons learned continue to inform our approach to safeguarding public events, managing crisis response, and conducting complex investigations into terrorism. As we plan for future major events and incident response, the Boston Marathon bombing stands as a stark reminder of the stakes—and a testament to the importance of preparedness, resilience, and unified action.

The response to the attack demonstrated that effective preparedness depends not only on planning but also on seamless collaboration and the critical importance of intelligence cooperation across all levels of law enforcement agencies and government. Close coordination between local, State, and Federal agencies was essential to ensuring public safety. This integrated effort was instrumental in the successful identification and apprehension of the suspects. The Boston Regional Intelligence Fusion Center (BRIC) served as a central hub for intelligence gathering during and after the attack. As one of the intelligence-sharing nodes established by the Department of Homeland Security, the BRIC synthesized information in real time from surveillance footage, social media monitoring, citizen reports, and law enforcement databases. This centralized and collaborative approach significantly accelerated the identification of critical evidence and suspects. The performance of the BRIC underscored the value of integrated intelligence operations and led to broader national investment in fusion center capabilities. This highlighted their role as force multipliers in complex emergencies by breaking down agency silos and enabling a unified response. To best safeguard against evolving threats, intelligence agencies must remain open to collaboration—not only sharing what is known, but actively seeking out what is unknown through cooperative efforts across jurisdictions. Equally important is how that information is communicated, as intelligence is only as effective as the clarity, context, and timeliness with which it is received and understood by those who must act on it. This mindset starts with leadership; the tone set by the chief matters, because what their leaders say, the officers do.

While the fusion center's intelligence response was swift in Boston, the city of Los Angelos used lessons learned from Boston by integrating Emergency Operations Centers into the fusion centers to proactively embed the LA's Emergency Management Department software during the 2022 Super Bowl, enabling minute-by-minute threat analysis for on-the-ground tactical teams. Another tool exemplifying the benefits of interagency coordination is the Department of Homeland Security's Special Event Assessment (SEAR) Rating. SEAR ratings are voluntarily submitted for special events, which are sent to DHS's Office of Operations Coordination by State, local, and Federal officials for an overall risk assessment. This intelligence is critical for on-the-ground security planning. The SEAR rating is currently utilized for major

events such as the Super Bowl and Kentucky Derby, and I would highly encourage it for the upcoming events as well. As the United States prepares to host upcoming global events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games, the continued integration of fusion centers into emergency operations and interagency collaborative resources like the SEAR rating will be critical to facilitating real-time communication, coordinated decision making, and effective threat mitigation across all levels of law enforcement.

As I have previously testified to this committee, during the Boston Marathon bombings, cell network capabilities dropped for all of those in the direct vicinity of the attacks. The overwhelming number of phone calls, texts, and internet searches rendered voice communications practically useless for everyone, including the police officers on the scene and those responding. With a lack of a secure network, communications between municipalities, local and Federal law enforcement were impeded, and change was critically important. In the years since, technological advancements have played an important role in enhancing investigative capabilities and public safety since the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings.

As a member of the board of advisors for AT&T and the company's FirstNet platform, I've seen the public-private partnership of FirstNet take on this challenge and improve first responders' ability to communicate on scene. The goal of FirstNet is to provide law enforcement and first responders with the ability to access a highly secure and completely reliable service network during times when commercial servers become overwhelmed, exactly when it is needed most. In 2018, the network launched "The FirstNet Core, a physically separate and highly secure infrastructure that creates a differentiated experience for first responders. FirstNet ensures an encrypted, end-to-end communication network for law enforcement. This partnership works for first responders.

Another aspect of technology that has seen significant improvement is AI capabilities of video and photo surveillance, both private and public. It has been well documented that the use of video surveillance from Boylston Street restaurants and photos provided by spectators who were at the scene of the attack led to the identification of the 2 suspects and provided a time line of their movements after the attacks, leading to their apprehension. While video surveillance can sometimes carry a negative connotation, it is essential to respect the fundamental right to personal privacy. However, in high-profile critical events, a clear cost-benefit analysis demonstrates that the enhanced safety and security provided by identifying and preventing the actions of bad actors outweighs the temporary compromise of privacy in public spaces. Law enforcement combined video with analytic resources available quickly and effectively after the fact. If only we had the tools to prevent it.

At the time of the bombings, law enforcement agencies also faced the challenge of sifting through and verifying information gathered from the scene, tips from the public, and witness accounts, while coordinating interagency decisions on how and when to share verified information with the public. The Boston Marathon bombing was one of the first incidents where law enforcement utilized the tools of social media, such as "X" formerly known as Twitter, to communicate directly with the public and media agencies. This was the Boston Police Department's most effective way to share pertinent safety information to the masses in real-time. As was published in a white paper I helped pen for the National Institute of Justice's Harvard Executive Sessions on Policing and Public Safety in March 2014, "[The Boston Police Department] successfully used Twitter to keep the public informed about the status of the investigation, to calm nerves and request assistance, to correct mistaken information reported by the press, and to ask for public restraint in the tweeting of information from police scanners. This demonstrated the level of trust and interaction that a department and a community can attain online."[1]

Reliance on open-source data, though, presents real challenges, as the sheer volume of information can both aid and hinder investigations. AI can now create realistic, false images of people and voice replication. As was the case during the marathon bombings, these "deep fakes", when used to interfere or disrupt an investigation, pose a distinct challenge to law enforcement that Congress and legislation must anticipate and prepare for. Deepfakes pose a significant threat to major sporting events by enabling compelling disinformation campaigns that can erode public trust and incite fear. In the lead-up to the 2024 Paris Olympics, a Russian-linked group released a deepfake video of Tom Cruise warning of violence and corruption at the Games, part of a broader effort to undermine confidence in French security and the event itself. These tactics included spoofed news broadcasts, digitally-fab-

[1] Davis, Edward F., Alejandro A. Alves, and David Alan Sklansky. *Social Media and Police Leadership: Lessons from Boston.* New Perspectives in Policing (Executive Session on Policing and Public Safety) March 2014.

ricated graffiti threats, and false claims of mass ticket returns. In the United States, the NFL has also flagged deepfakes and AI-generated phishing as emerging threats, warning that impersonations of players or staff could lead to reputational damage, data breaches, or public panic. As generative AI tools become more accessible, the potential for viral misinformation targeting athletes, teams, and venues continues to grow, making deepfake resilience a crucial component of modern event security.

Deepfakes are just one of the many resources available to cyber criminals. Cyber attacks have emerged as a sophisticated and escalating threat to major sporting events, with high-profile venues and organizations increasingly targeted for espionage, disruption, and extortion. Recent global incidents underscore the scope of this threat: as stated, Russian-linked hackers targeted French Olympic planners ahead of Paris 2024; Iranian actors leaked personal data of Israeli athletes; and ransomware crippled IT systems at the Grand Palais, an Olympic venue. In Asia, China reported over 200,000 cyber attacks against infrastructure supporting the 2025 Asian Winter Games. The threat has grown exponentially—Tokyo 2020 alone saw 4.4 billion cyber attack attempts, prompting agencies like Microsoft and the UK's NCSC to classify sports as high-risk sectors.

In the United States, the Super Bowl is emblematic of the cybersecurity stakes. This mirrors a broader trend: 70 percent of sports organizations now experience at least one cyber attack annually, often targeting sensitive financial data, internal communications, or live event feeds. Personal data from athletes and fans is increasingly vulnerable due to the wide-spread use of digital apps and IoT-connected systems. From data leaks that endanger athlete safety to attacks that disrupt critical venue functions or broadcast feeds, cyber threats now pose a tangible risk to national security, public confidence, and the operational continuity of premier sporting events. A coordinated, layered cybersecurity strategy is no longer optional, it is a prerequisite for safe and resilient event execution.

As technology rapidly evolves, so does the potential for its misuse, with advancements capable of exponentially increasing the risks associated with emerging threats. A striking example is the rise of First-Person View (FPV) drones, which are becoming an increasing concern at major public venues across the United States. Often referred to as the biggest innovation in warfare in decades, FPV drones represent a transformative shift in how aerial threats are deployed, blending low-cost accessibility with high-impact potential. Unlike conventional GPS-stabilized drones, FPV drones are manually piloted, highly maneuverable, and capable of streaming real-time video to operators through goggles or screens. They bypass geofencing restrictions and altitude limitations, enabling them to navigate complex environments, such as stadium entrances, bleachers, or rooftops, with precision and speed. Their analog controls and low radar visibility make them challenging to detect, as they can be launched discreetly from areas like parking lots with little to no advance warning. The unfortunate reality is that it is only a matter of time until this technology is used for terrorist goals. To effectively address the evolving threat landscape posed by the proliferation of privately-operated drones, a more robust approach is required, particularly with regard to identifying potential insider threats. This is especially critical in the context of high-profile or special events. For example, in 2014, individuals from Massachusetts were thwarted in an attempt to attack the Pentagon using self-piloted drones; this early attempt underscores the importance of proactive threat assessment and mitigation strategies.

Most recently, during the January 2025 AFC Wildcard game at M&T Stadium, the game was stopped due to the use of an unauthorized drone hovering above the stadium. This incident marked the third drone-related disruption at the venue in 2 years, highlighting on-going security concerns about how FPV drones can interrupt and cause potential threats to major events.

Although several promising technologies exist, including jamming systems that can intercept or disable threatening drones, these technologies are expensive and not readily available outside of a military setting. The most glaring concern remains the lack of an acceptable, coordinated response protocol available to State and local law enforcement agencies. A number of bipartisan bills have been introduced over the years; however, these efforts have stalled. The recent Executive Order helps, but does not go far enough. It is imperative that we prioritize meaningful legislation that equips law enforcement with the necessary tools to address the growing threat posed by the public availability of drones. This absence of a clear tactical and legal framework to respond to drone incursions represents a critical gap in our current public safety strategy, and one that must be urgently addressed to safeguard future events.

As the United States prepares to host a series of high-profile international sporting events, we must draw clear lessons from past domestic incidents like the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings. That tragic event underscored the devastating potential

of lone-wolf actors and the vulnerabilities of open-access venues. Since then, the threat landscape has evolved significantly: extremist-driven acts of violence, foreign influence operations, and ideologically-motivated terrorism, both domestic and international, have surged across the country. Recent attacks targeting public officials, religious gatherings, and diplomatic personnel reveal a growing pattern of politically- and religiously-motivated violence, often involving veterans, foreign nationals, or radicalized individuals exploiting ideological divisions. Coupled with rising threats of espionage and terrorism from state and non-state actors such as Iran, North Korea, China, and ISIS, these developments demand a comprehensive security posture. Protecting the integrity of large-scale events now requires not only traditional counterterrorism efforts but also robust intelligence coordination, foreign influence detection, cyber resilience, and proactive community threat assessments.

In closing, while advancements have created a better environment for law enforcement and agencies to respond to crimes, the risk of danger and sacrifice that police throughout our Nation face should not be understated. As new technology becomes available to law enforcement, it is also becomes available to criminals and terrorists. New threats, both physical and cyber, emerge daily, especially those related to drone technology and advancements. Police will continue to adapt and overcome but it is critical to ensure a coordinated effort for detection and avoidance is in place. I want to extend my gratitude to our law enforcement and intelligence community partners for their unwavering commitment to protecting our Nation. I thank you and this task force for the opportunity to reflect on the hard-won lessons since the Boston Marathon tragedy 12 years ago—and to consider how we can apply them moving forward. As the United States prepares to take center stage by hosting several major international sporting events in the coming years, we have a unique opportunity to demonstrate leadership, resilience, and innovation in public safety on a global scale.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Davis.

I now recognize Colonel Hodges for 5 minutes for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT P. HODGES, SUPERINTENDENT, LOUISIANA STATE POLICE

Colonel HODGES. Good afternoon, Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and distinguished Task Force Members. I'm Colonel Robert Hodges, superintendent of Louisiana State Police. I was born and raised in New Orleans and have served as a trooper for the last 30 years. I've held a variety of positions in both patrol and investigations, culminating to my appointment in January 2024.

I'm here today to provide an overview of how Louisiana navigated extraordinary public safety challenges in early 2025, ranging from a terrorist attack to inclement weather. The testimony reflects not only what we've endured, but what we have achieved through resilience and partnership.

On New Year's Day 2025, just after 3 a.m., a vehicle bypassed police barricades and plowed into pedestrians on Bourbon Street in the city of New Orleans. Fourteen lives were tragically lost and dozens others were injured. This was not a tragic accident. It was confirmed by Federal partners as a terrorist attack. LSP troopers and first responders immediately rendered aid and secured the scene. Due to a longstanding partnership with the Homeland Security Investigations, FBI, ATF, and New Orleans Police Department, LSP initially took complete control of the scene, allowing a rapid stabilization while Federal teams mobilized to begin their investigation. Agencies across multiple States worked together to identify and locate other potential suspects.

In the wake of the attack and with the Sugar Bowl just hours away, public safety priorities immediately shifted. LSP and partners implemented an expanded security plan and delayed the col-

lege football playoff game by just one day, demonstrating the strength of interagency coordination and our shared commitment to public safety.

As preparations began for Super Bowl LIX, Louisiana was struck by a historic snowstorm which brought over 12 inches to New Orleans and Southeast Louisiana, closing all of the major interstate thoroughfares. The city was effectively paralyzed and roadways were iced, access routes shut down, and emergency services stretched to the limit. Nonetheless, LSP troopers continued operations, conducting rescues, securing roads and pressing forward with Super Bowl preparations. On February 9, 2025, Super Bowl LIX went forward without incident.

More than 500 LSP troopers and DPS officers and over 300 Louisiana National Guard members were deployed, including the French Quarter Enhanced Security Zone. The operation demonstrated the effectiveness of planning, discipline, and community coordination.

Immediately afterward, our attention turned to Mardi Gras. Enhanced safety protocols remained in place throughout the State. Over 150 troopers and DPS personnel were deployed for the carnival season to ensure secure, accessible celebrations.

In conclusion, during that 3-month span, Louisiana overcame a terrorist attack, a paralyzing snowstorm, and multiple high-risk public events. These experiences tested our infrastructure systems' resolve, but they also reinforced our readiness, our colleagues locally, rather our unity and our mission focus. Through these events, we confirmed the need for several critical resources from the Department of Homeland Security, including the Special Event Threat Assessment, or SEAR, and TFR, or temporary flight restrictions, along with UAS mitigation and funding for training and equipment. Once Super Bowl LIX was approved as a SEAR 1, the deployment over 100 explosive K–9 detection teams significantly increased our ability to provide pre-event sweeps of large venues throughout the week of Super Bowl.

Furthermore, the allowance of the TFR expansion and UAS mitigation efforts enabled LSP to collaborate with local, other State, and Federal partners to ensure a drone mitigation teams collectively. This team identified over 250 violations and intercepted over 80 pilots violating the TFR restrictions. The CR1 classification, as Commissioner Davis talked about earlier, also opened funding resources for training and equipment, including additional robotic and X-ray devices for explosive detection and other tactical enhancements.

The challenges we faced were unprecedented, but the lessons learned will shape our path forward. As we say in our department, it's one team, one dream, and one Louisiana.

Thank you for this opportunity and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Colonel Hodges follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT P. HODGES

JULY 22, 2025

RESILIENCE IN ACTION: LOUISIANA STATE POLICE'S UNPRECEDENTED START TO 2025

Distinguished Members of the committee, good afternoon. I am Colonel Robert Hodges, superintendent of the Louisiana State Police (LSP). I was born and raised in New Orleans and have served this great State for over 30 years. During that time, I've held a variety of positions in Patrol and Investigations, culminating in my appointment as superintendent in January 2024.

I am here today to provide an overview of how Louisiana navigated extraordinary public safety challenges in 2025, ranging from terrorism to extreme weather. This testimony reflects not only what we've endured but what we've achieved through resilience and partnership.

January 1, 2025: Vehicle-Ramming Terrorist Attack

On New Year's Day 2025, just after 3 o'clock a.m., a vehicle bypassed police barricades and plowed into pedestrians on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Fourteen lives were tragically lost, and dozens more were injured. This was not a tragic accident—it was confirmed by Federal partners to be a terrorist attack.

LSP Troopers and local first responders immediately rendered aid and secured the scene. Due to long-standing partnerships with Homeland Security Investigations, the FBI, and the ATF, LSP initially took complete control of the scene, allowing a rapid stabilization while Federal teams mobilized to begin their investigation. Agencies across multiple States worked together to identify and locate the suspect.

In the wake of the attack, and with the Sugar Bowl scheduled just days later, public safety priorities immediately shifted. LSP and its partners implemented an expanded security plan that delayed the College Football Playoff game by only one day, demonstrating the strength of interagency coordination and our shared commitment to public safety.

Snowstorm, Super Bowl, and Mardi Gras: Resilience in Action

As we began preparations for Super Bowl LIX, Louisiana was struck by a historic snowstorm that brought over 12 inches of snow to New Orleans. The city was effectively paralyzed, with roadways coated in ice, access routes shut down, and emergency services stretched to the limit. Nonetheless, LSP Troopers continued operations—conducting rescues, securing roads, and pressing forward with Super Bowl preparations.

On February 9, 2025, Super Bowl LIX went forward without incident. More than 500 LSP and DPS personnel and over 300 National Guard members were deployed, including in the French Quarter's Enhanced Security Zone. The operation demonstrated the effectiveness of planning, discipline, and community coordination.

Immediately afterward, our attention turned to Mardi Gras. Enhanced safety protocols remained in place throughout the State. Over 150 Troopers and DPS personnel were deployed for the Carnival season to ensure secure, accessible celebrations.

Conclusion

In a 3-month span, Louisiana overcame a terrorist attack, a paralyzing snowstorm, and multiple high-risk public events. These experiences tested our infrastructure, systems, and resolve, but they also reinforced our readiness, unity, and mission focus.

Louisiana State Police has demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and professionalism. Our efforts have been grounded in partnership with our Federal colleagues, local agencies, and the people of Louisiana.

Through these events, we confirmed the need for several critical resources from the Department of Homeland Security, including the Special Event Assessment Rating (SEAR), TFR expansions and UAS mitigation, and funding for training and equipment.

Once Super Bowl LIX was approved as a SEAR 1 event, the deployment of over 100 explosive detection canine teams significantly increased the ability to provide pre-event sweeps of several large venues throughout the week of Super Bowl activities.

Furthermore, the allowance for TFR expansions and UAS mitigation efforts enabled LSP to collaborate with local and Federal public safety agencies to establish a Drone Mitigation Team. This team identified over 250 TFR violations and intercepted over 80 pilots violating the temporary flight restriction.

The SEAR 1 classification also opened funding sources for training and equipment, including additional robotic and X-ray devices for explosive detection and other tactical enhancements.

The challenges we faced were unprecedented, but the lessons learned will shape our path forward.

As we say in our department: One Team. One Dream. One Louisiana.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I welcome your questions.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Colonel Hodges.

I recognize Chief Graves for 5 minutes for an opening statement.

STATEMENT OF CHIEF STACEY GRAVES, POLICE CHIEF, KANSAS CITY MISSOURI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief GRAVES. Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and distinguished Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I also thank my Congressman Cleaver for the wonderful introduction. My name is Stacey Graves and I am proud to serve as a chief of police for the Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department.

Our department is steadfast in its commitment to delivering a safe and successful World Cup experience for participants and fans. Drawing on valuable lessons learned from past incidents and embracing innovative strategies and resource management and collaboration, the department stands ready to meet unprecedented challenges that lie ahead. The opportunity to host the World Cup is not only a testament to our city's vibrant spirit, but also an occasion to showcase Kansas City, Missouri, on the global stage.

Full-time dedicated planning for this event started in January 2024. Since then, the police department has dedicated even more full-time staff members in planning for all aspects of the upcoming World Cup FIFA 2026. Regional coordination has been key in planning. Beginning with 6 planning committees comprised of various public safety leaders as well as nongovernmental organizations. Planning committees are focused on issues ranging from intelligence analysis and sharing, interoperability, command control and coordination, critical infrastructure protection, and tactical coordination, just to name a few.

Given our city's many championships, we have experienced large-scale events. These learning opportunities involve crowd management, public communication, critical infrastructure protection, and advanced incident command system training. Full-scale exercises and tabletop exercises have been executed and continue to be planned as we test and retest our plans and readiness.

One incident in particular guides our planning and execution of large-scale events like the World Cup. On February 14, 2024, a tragic shooting occurred during the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl LVIII celebration parade and rally. Despite careful planning and implementation of lessons learned from previous large-scale events, an act of violence disrupted what was intended to be a joyous occasion for Kansas City. The incident resulted in significant harm and cast a somber tone over the day underscoring the unpredictable nature of such open-air public events and the critical importance of coordinated emergency response and planning. The swift actions of first responders and mutual aid personnel whose roles had been expanded based on prior experience played a vital role in mitigating further harm and provided aid to those impacted at the scene. This

tragedy stands as a solemn reminder of the ever-present need for vigilance and preparedness in planning for mass gatherings.

In Kansas City, we understand what is needed to ensure we are prepared for an event like World Cup FIFA 2026, which will arrive in 11 American cities in less than a year. As we draw near to this exciting and massive event, we have 2 key areas of concern.

The first is funding. To date, the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department has not received any Federal funding toward the planning and preparation for the 2020 World Cup. We've submitted a budget request for personnel costs and equipment to the KC 2026 World Cup Planning Committee, which was then used in a comprehensive Kansas City regional budget submission to the Federal Government. We are ever so grateful for the One Big Beautiful Bill providing $625 million for planning and security costs relating to the 2026 FIFA World Cup host cities. It's our understanding that funding will be allocated amongst host committees based on their budget estimates submitted as part of the $625 million and will follow the general structure of the State Homeland Security Grant Program in the form of separate grants for each host city committee.

However, we are still awaiting guidance on the timing, program restrictions, and application for this grant. I also am aware that that this is has just been passed. Some of this is changing day by day and it's progressing very quickly. So thank you so much for that.

This puts host cities in a compressed time line to procure equipment, train members for usage, and deploy the equipment in time for FIFA. We respectfully request Congress to consider the following regarding the fund funding process: We respectfully urge the parties to work quickly to finalize the funding execution process to secure the necessary equipment and resources identified in the host committee budget estimates.

The second primary concern is detection and counter-UAS authority. Despite our responsibility to safeguard the public, the local law enforcement agencies are currently constrained by Federal regulations that prohibit or severely limit our ability to detect, disrupt, or disable unauthorized drones in real time. This creates a significant operational gap that hinders our capacity to respond effectively to aerial threats. The proliferation of consumer drones, their affordability, and their potential use by bad actors amplifies this concern.

At times, our officers are put in the position of observing potentially dangerous drone activity without the legal authority or technical tools to mitigate the threat. This not only endangers the safety of event attendees and infrastructure, but also undermines public confidence in our ability to provide safe environment.

We respectfully request Congress to prioritize the following: Authorize the deployment of unmanned aerial systems, UAS, detection and counter-UAS technology at local and regional levels.

No. 2, current FAA BVLOS, or beyond visual line of sight, waivers without visual observers are limited to 200 feet above ground level, while standard UAV operations allow up to 400 feet AGL. This restriction hampers our ability to monitor and secure wide areas, particularly around stadiums and large venues. For events

like FIFA World Cup authorization for BVLOS operations at 400 feet AGL is essential.

Ensure Federal UAS teams are embedded at each World Cup host sites to provide air space security.

Without these changes, the increasing use of drones, whether by careless hobbyists or bad actors, will continue to outpace the ability of local law enforcement to respond. We stand ready to collaborate with Federal partners to close this critical gap in public safety.

American law enforcement officers are invested in the safety and betterment of our country. We are the first responders to violence and terrorism in our city and stand ready to keep people safe from all threats every day. We look forward to working together to ensure the 2026 FIFA World Cup events hosted in American cities are safe and secure.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and I stand ready to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Chief Graves follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STACEY GRAVES

JULY 22, 2025

Thank you Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Pou, and Members of the Task Force for convening today's hearing.

I lead the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, a department with a full strength of over 1,400 sworn law enforcement officers who serve a city with over half a million residents. Our police department covers over 300 square miles in Kansas City, touching 4 counties. Kansas City has hosted, planned, and responded to numerous large-scale events. We have hosted the 2012 MLB All-Star Game, 2015 World Series Championship parade/rally, the 2023 NFL Draft, the 2020, 2023, and 2024 Superbowl World Championship parades and rallies, in addition to several events, celebrations, parades, and protests.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department is steadfast in its commitment to delivering a safe and successful World Cup experience. Drawing on valuable lessons learned from past incidents and embracing innovative strategies in resource management and collaboration, the department stands ready to meet the unprecedented challenges that lie ahead. The opportunity to host the World Cup is not only a testament to our city's vibrant spirit but also an occasion to showcase Kansas City, Missouri on the global stage.

Full-time dedicated planning for the World Cup events in Kansas City, Missouri started in January 2024. Since then, the Police Department has dedicated even more full-time staff members in planning for all aspects of the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026 events. Regional coordination has been key in planning from the beginning, with 6 planning committees comprised of various public safety leaders, as well as non-governmental organizations. Committees have now grown to over 20 distinct areas of planning to ensure the best possible preparations are in place. Planning committees ranging from intelligence analysis and sharing, interoperability, command control and coordination, critical infrastructure protection, and tactical coordination, to name a few.

Lessons learned regarding large crowd, mass gatherings, and best practices have been implemented and have resulted in a layered security screening approach, expanded perimeters around venues, enhanced vehicle screening areas, and additional transportation safety and security. Multiple training opportunities have been sought out and brought directly to our region in preparing specifically for World Cup events. The learning opportunities involve crowd management, public communication, critical infrastructure protection, and advanced incident command system training. Full-scale exercises and tabletop exercises have been executed and continue to be planned as we test and retest our plans and readiness.

LESSONS LEARNED/CONFIRMED

Kansas City has witnessed a remarkable era of championship sports over the past decade. The Kansas City Royals and Chiefs' World Championships have provided opportunities for celebration. The Kansas City Missouri Police Department plans large events using an all-hazards approach, integrating parade organizers, medical and fire personnel, Federal partners, city services, State agencies, and regional law enforcement. This continued cooperation in our pre-planning has only enhanced our partnerships and has allowed for comprehensive contingency plans to be in place.

After each mass gathering celebration, the Police Department has conducted after-activation reviews which have led to improved security plans at subsequent events. For example, after the Royals Championship parade in 2015, we improved ingress and egress areas and created pathway barriers for first responders for an improved emergency response. Although we had vehicle mitigation along the route for the Chiefs' Super Bowl parade in 2020, an intoxicated driver drove through the start of the parade barricade and made it on to the route, causing officers to utilize a tactical vehicle intervention to stop the threat, resulting in no injuries. In 2020, we began utilizing DMAT (Disaster Medical Assistance Teams) to ensure a proper response to a potential mass casualty event. These lessons learned in 2020 and 2023, led to additional security measures such as enhanced vehicle mitigation, improved public communication, comprehensive traffic plans, and integrated operations at the 2024 Super Bowl parade and rally.

On February 14, 2024, a tragic shooting occurred during the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl LVIII (58) celebration parade and rally. Despite careful planning and the implementation of lessons learned from previous large-scale events, an act of violence disrupted what was intended to be a joyous occasion for Kansas City. The incident resulted in significant harm and cast a somber tone over the day, underscoring the unpredictable nature of such open-air, public events and the critical importance of coordinated emergency response and planning.

The swift actions of first responders and mutual aid personnel, whose roles had been expanded based on prior experience, played a vital part in mitigating further harm and provided aid to those impacted at the scene. This tragedy stands as a solemn reminder of the ever-present need for vigilance and preparedness in planning for mass gatherings.

Staffing for the 2024 parade was comprised of 900 law enforcement personnel from 71 different Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies. In addition to route security, specialized law enforcement personnel for explosive device detection and response, police K9s, SWAT, traffic control, and drone mitigation were included in the plan. Hundreds of additional first responders such as fire department and medical personnel also assisted with parade planning and implementation.

The 2020 implementation of DMAT (Disaster Medical Assistance Teams) at strategic locations was instrumental in providing immediate medical attention to victims in 2024, which saved lives. Rapid triage and transport of critically injured patients to nearby hospitals, combined with pre-MCI standard medical treatment, minimized hospital transport and should be standard practice for large events.

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department completes risk assessments as part of the planning process. This allows for the pre-planning of both known and assumed factors leading to the correct allocation of resources. Placing the needed number of law enforcement officers in areas throughout the footprint allows for a quick and appropriate response. In addition, the priority placed on continuous training aligned with the latest standards. This was evident after shots rang out at the rally in 2024, as all law enforcement officers ran toward the threat. It is the direct result of this proper deployment and continued training that put law enforcement officers in the right place to apprehend the suspects quickly and secure the scene within minutes. By utilizing risk assessments, we can plan for complex-coordinated attacks, as well other acts of violence and public disorder.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONGRESS

FIFA World Cup 2026 will arrive in 11 American cities in approximately 10 to 11 months. As we draw near, there are 2 key areas of concern in preparing for the events.

Funding.—To date, the Kansas City Missouri Police Department has not received any Federal funds toward the planning and preparation for the FIFA World Cup 2026. We have submitted a budget request for personnel costs and equipment to the KC 2026, FIFA World Cup, Planning Committee which was then used in a comprehensive Kansas City regional budget submission to the Federal Government.

We are grateful for the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB), providing $625 million for planning and security costs relating to the 2026 FIFA World Cup host cities. It is

our understanding that funding will be allocated among Host Committees based on their budget estimates submitted as part of the $625 million, and will follow the general structure of the State Homeland Security Grant Program in the form of separate grants for each Host City Committee. Unfortunately, not much else is known about the timing, program restrictions, and application process for this grant.

From experience, applying for and being sub-awarded State Homeland Security Program grants, funding most likely will not be available until this fall. This puts host cities in a compressed time frame to procure equipment, train members for usage, and deploy the equipment in time for the FIFA World Cup 2026 events. We anticipate we will likely be trying to purchase the same type of equipment, at the same time, as all 11 other host city agencies, which may negatively impact delivery times.

We respectfully urge the parties to work quickly to finalize the funding execution process to secure the necessary equipment and resources identified in the Host Committee budget estimates.

Detection and Counter-UAS Authority.—Despite our responsibility to safeguard the public, local law enforcement agencies are currently constrained by Federal regulations that prohibit, or severely limit our ability to detect, disrupt, or disable unauthorized drones in real time. This creates a significant operational gap and hinders our capacity to respond effectively to aerial threats. The proliferation of consumer drones, their affordability and their potential use by bad actors amplifies this concern.

At times, our officers are put in the position of observing potentially dangerous drone activity without the legal authority or technical tools to mitigate the threat. This not only endangers the safety of event attendees and infrastructure, but also undermines public confidence in our ability to provide a secure environment.

We respectfully request Congress to prioritize the following:

1. Authorize the deployment of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) detection and counter-UAS technology at local and regional levels.
2. Current FAA BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) waivers without visual observers are limited to 200 feet Above Ground Level (AGL), while standard UAV operations allow up to 400 feet AGL. This restriction hampers our ability to monitor and secure wide areas, particularly around stadiums and large venues. For events like the FIFA World Cup 2026, authorization for BVLOS operations at 400 feet AGL is essential.
3. Ensure Federal UAS teams are embedded at each FIFA World Cup 2026 host sites to provide air space security.

Without these changes, the increasing use of drones, whether by careless hobbyists or bad actors, will continue to outpace the ability of local law enforcement to respond. We stand ready to collaborate with Federal partners to close this critical gap in public safety.

American law enforcement officers are invested in the safety and betterment of our country. We are the first responders to violence and terrorism in our cities and stand ready to keep the people safe from all threats, every day. We look forward to working together to ensure the FIFA World Cup 2026 events hosted in American cities are safe and secure.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Chief Graves.

I recognize myself for questions.

Commissioner Davis, it is great to see you again. It is hard to imagine it has been 12 years since you testified before this very committee after the tragic events of the Boston bombing. I want to thank you for both yours and law enforcement's heroism and the first responders in saving lives that day.

We ran an investigation. I remember walking down Boylston Street in Boston with you. Then we found several disturbing facts. Information was not shared. The Russian report FSB that Tamerlan had traveled overseas, radicalized, came back, was never brought to your attention even though you had 2 officers on the Joint Terrorism Task Force. The travel that he made to Dagestan to radicalize was never communicated with you, sir, even though you had 2 officers on the Joint Terrorism Task Force. Then to make things worse, the DHS and the FBI using Post-It notes were not connecting the dots on the travel, and on and on.

I remember we asked you the question would this have changed things if you had known about this? You, of course, said yes, and we would have monitored the suspect and, unfortunately, you didn't have that opportunity at that time. I think since then we, we made a lot of progress within the JTTS with an MOU that requires the sharing of the information with the State and locals.

Can you speak to lessons learned from this tragic experience that we went through and how is it better today? One final point on the—you talked about AI and how that can now play a huge factor in these investigations.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So looking back on those days, I can remember us meeting with Director Muller, who had good intentions on establishing the Joint Terrorism Task Force. There was supposed to be complete sharing across that organization, but some of the mid-level managers in there kind-of pushed back against that, and I think that really was what impeded a really effective preventive measure being put in place.

So, as you said, with your help and the help of Congress and the Senate, we were able to change the rules there. That's not an easy thing to do and I feel very happy that we had that impact across the Nation. It's working today. My partner from the FBI was Rick DesLauriers. He was a tremendous asset to what we were doing. But organizations can sometimes be difficult. So stressing the cooperation and coordination and the equal treatment of all aspects of law enforcement, Federal, State, and local, so everyone's at the table and able to share their little piece of information through these fusion centers and the BRICs can make all the difference in the world.

Artificial intelligence is extremely dangerous. The benefit, hopefully, will outweigh the danger as we put things in place to determine what's legitimate and not legitimate on-line. But the incredible gains that have been made in going through reams and reams of video and photographs, which is what we did in the time following the incident which actually led to the capture of the these two guys, has improved vastly.

The impediment right now is coming to a compromise with privacy rights experts and advocates and weighing that, that cost-benefit analysis between public safety and people's privacy and making sure we have a well-reasoned-out and effective balance of the two. I think that that still needs work. Those are the two things I'd mentioned.

Mr. MCCAUL. I am glad we you had cameras, otherwise we never could have identified the subjects. I know there was some dispute about the traffic lights having access to that as well.

On the issue of UAVs, I know in 2013, the same year as the Boston bombing, you also tracked a team that were threatening to bomb the Pentagon with UAVs. I think to Mr. Davis, Colonel Hodges, and Chief Graves, all three of you have referenced to UAVs. I see this, you know, we have had vehicles, we have had bombs. In my view, this is probably the greatest emerging threat now to these games. We saw how effective drones were in the Ukraine response to the Russians, how cheap and inexpensive they are, yet it is very difficult to detect and to counter those measures.

Mr. Davis, you wouldn't mind commenting on your experience, and Colonel Hodges and Chief Graves?

Mr. DAVIS. Sure. Briefly, the success in the Ukraine and other countries of using these devices on the battlefield is front and center in the minds of malign actors who cause harm or want to cause harm here. So it's vitally important that we pay attention to this and we coordinate a Federal, State, and local response.

Chief Graves mentioned that the ability to work on these issues by local police is critical. There's been a lot of talk about it right now. There was a Presidential order, Executive Order, that came out recently that moved the ball down the field a little bit, but more needs to be done. There has to be a full court partnership there. The latest technology has to be employed, both electronic jamming techniques and also actual use of kinetic force against these things to protect the people who are in these stadiums. I cannot imagine if there's an attack from the air, what will happen to the crowd in an event like this.

Mr. MCCAUL. Colonel Hodges.

Colonel HODGES. So we saw much success in Louisiana, specifically New Orleans. Just like your field intelligence teams working together, like the commissioner said, that's what we did for our drone team to detect, identify, and mitigate those drones throughout the special events. Most of the upcoming national events that are across the country are going to be outdoor, and that's the biggest concern with the drones. Having a member from the local police, the State police, sheriff's office, and the Federal entities together to collaborate, just having the availability or the authorization to mitigate, which is to disable or return the drone back to the controller, is not enough. You have to coordinate with the partners. We did that to ensure that we did not take down another public safety agency's drone, who were, in fact, doing the same as we did.

So as we move forward, because drones are more accessible, because they have a capability for a higher payload, and can remain in the air, the flight time is significantly longer, it's a unique challenge for all of law enforcement to maintain a temporary flight restriction. So to detect those within that TFR, even though they're up for various things throughout the year, when those special events take place simultaneously across the country, we must have that collaboration that I think we showed through those special events, both Sugar Bowl, New Year's Day, Super Bowl, and in our carnival season.

Mr. MCCAUL. That was a great example of being successful.

Chief Graves.

Chief GRAVES. Kansas City, Missouri Police Department is no stranger to drones. We've been utilizing drones for different purposes for 10 to 12 years, everything from crime scene capturing to investigating traffic accidents to making entry with some of our SWAT teams. We are in the stages now of launching our drones as first responders program and have already taken shipment of those drones. But even still, the authority for local law enforcement, who are usually on the ground handling any kind of an incident, right, in real time, needs that authority. Not only the authority, but also the technology to down drones.

You know, we are there in various different situations. Obviously, you know, you could use the Chiefs parade in that situation. You know, there was a lot of drones going over in the air, but at that point we had a lot of our Federal agencies. I will say that in Kansas City we have a wonderful historical relationship with all of our Federal partners. But even still, there are times when local law enforcement is experiencing an issue, sees a threat, and doesn't have the authority or the equipment to address that threat in real time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Many times it is coming from—you know, you are on the ground near the line of defense and we need that two-way street of information. I think this is something this task force would be looking at is the authorities given to State locals to work with the Feds on UAVs.

Chief GRAVES. I think also the problem is the availability. I mean, I don't know if you'd say it's availability, but they're inexpensive, anyone can access them. Even here recently I observed one that's used for agriculture, that you can fly over a field with pesticides. Those types of situations where you can just buy something like that on-line, you know, just having that local law enforcement authority to mitigate that threat in real time is really what's needed. I know that's been a topic of conversation here recently and I just encourage you to continue that conversation and help us.

Mr. MCCAUL. I agree. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Ranking Member Ms. Pou.

Ms. POU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, thank you to all the witnesses that are providing testimony.

Chief Graves, thank you. Thank you for joining us today. I appreciate your time and willingness to share insight on how we can better support our State and local partners and prepare our communities with high-profile events like the FIFA World Cup. Your testimony is especially important given the continuing toll of gun violence in the mass shootings in our country.

What should have been a joyful event turned tragic when an argument escalated into gunfire during the celebration of the Kansas City Chiefs Super Bowl victory. Sadly, 1 person was killed and at least 20 others were injured, including 8 children. The time line in the after-action report shows just how quickly a situation can escalate and become deadly. Gun violence remains a persistent threat that law enforcement must be plan for among all other threats we have heard about today.

According to the Gun Violence Archives, we have already been at least—there have already been at least 231 mass shootings in the United States this year, resulting in 175 deaths and over 1,000 injuries. We must do all that we can to be protect fans, athletes, innocent bystanders, especially children from this on-going threat during our major public events.

Chief Graves, from your experience, how do firearms affect our police plan for security at mass gathering events? What did your department learn from the parade shooting, about the presence of firearms in the crowds?

Chief GRAVES. As we plan for all situations, obviously localized gun violence is one of those. You know, when you look at these mass gatherings, we're looking at lone attacks, we're looking at co-

ordinated terrorist attacks, but also localized gun violence. On that day, on February 14, 2024, there were 2 groups of people that had a perceived provocation with one another that led to gun violence.

The lack of, I guess, the respect for life, conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and just going straight to guns in a conflict is a problem in many cities in America. I would say, you know, as we plan for those, we want to make sure that we have enough officers that are on the ground that can respond, that can immediately stop a threat, or, in fact, if we see something brewing, we can deescalate it.

In this situation we had a lot of officers right in the area where the shooting happened. At times law enforcement is no longer a deterrent when someone decides to pull a trigger. You know, we've seen that time and again not only in my city, but also across the United States. So just making sure that we are properly deployed and that we also have the training that you saw on display of officers running toward the threat when you have what you believe to be an active shooter.

Ms. POU. Thank you. Thank you. Chief, very quickly, how do the police departments ensure that people are secure not just at the main event, but also in areas where fans gather to watch the event at places like the Fan Fest, bars and restaurants? How do we ensure that people are safe from the altercations that may erupt into these mass shootings or other major incidents? What is your thought on that?

Chief GRAVES. I want to make a note of the Super Bowl parade and rally where shots were fired. You know, we had officers there at the ready and looking forward into planning for some of those. That's one of the challenges of those mass gatherings. It's an open-air public event. We had the parade route secured. We had plenty of officers in and around the rally and along the route. But, of course, if you don't have a perimetered, secured entry, that is when you have some of those challenges in those public open-air events. It's open to all. I would say we had close to a million people in and around that area on February 14 in 2024.

So looking forward, when you are looking at some of those events, whether that be Fan Fest or some of the matches that are going to take place at Arrowhead Stadium, there are levels and levels of security that will be in place to make sure that we stop any threat before it comes into the door. We will continue to do that in and around some of the events. So we will also not—in addition to those officers that are on duty, we also will have off-duty officers that will be working in different venues to make sure that those areas are safe, also.

Ms. POU. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. MCCAUL. The gentlewoman yields.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Gimenez.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Question I guess to all of you. Start out with the sheriff. Sheriff Cordero-Stutz, if you had a gunman that you identified as a threat, do you have the authority to stop that?

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. If you've identified an immediate threat that is going to take action? Yes, we do.

Mr. GIMENEZ. OK. If you had a, I guess Sheriff Graves, if you had a vehicle coming toward a group of people and you know that there was mal intent, you know, gunning it down, and you knew that they were going to run over a lot of people, do you have the authority to stop that vehicle?

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Absolutely.

Mr. GIMENEZ. If you had somebody with a Molotov cocktail about ready to toss it into a group of people, Colonel Hodges, do you have the authority to stop that?

Colonel HODGES. Yes, sir.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Yes, that is what I thought. So even though, you know, even though we still have a number of threats, our local law enforcement partners have the authority to stop that.

Sheriff Cordero-Stutz, if you had a drone heading toward Hard Rock Stadium, unidentified, et cetera, and you don't know what the intent was, do you have the authority to stop that?

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. With that information, sir, in a very, very limited way. Additionally, it's not just the authority, sir. It's the technology to be able to——

Mr. GIMENEZ. I am saying even if you had the technology, I don't think you have the authority to stop it.

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Correct. With that information, no, we would not. We need a lot more.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Chief Graves, same thing, right?

Chief GRAVES. That's correct. We don't have the authority to down a drone.

Mr. GIMENEZ. That is the problem. I know that my colleague, Representative Steube, has introduced a bill to give you that authority. We need to, and we need to move that as quickly as we can because, frankly, that is the one thing that really, really worries me, not only for these events, but also to protect some of our infrastructure.

Can you imagine if we had a Ukraine-style attack, some of our major airports, what would that do to air travel? It would stop it in its track. So our airports don't have that authority, our sheriffs don't have that authority, our local law enforcement doesn't have that authority. We better give it to them quickly because if we have thought about it, they thought about it, too. So we need to move on this as quickly as possible.

There are two things we need to do: we need to share the technology and we need to share the capability, and we also need to share the authority for you to do something about it. Because at the end of the day, you are the ones that are protecting your local communities. We come after the fact. We are the third tier. Local first, then State, and then the Federal Government.

So, you know, would you agree with that assessment? Would the 4 of you agree with that assessment?

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. Yes, sir.

Chief GRAVES. Yes, sir.

Colonel HODGES. Yes, absolutely, Congressman.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Now, Chief Stutz, if we—I am sorry, Sheriff, if you had—if we had the identified the technology and we have some kind of—the Federal Government did some kind of certification and

we gave you the authority, would you wait for us to buy it or would you buy it yourself? The capability.

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Absolutely. I would make sure that I would purchase that capability. But we need the funds to be able to do so.

Mr. GIMENEZ. No, I got it.

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Yes.

Mr. GIMENEZ. But at the end of the day, even if we didn't give you the funds, was it something that you would purchase to protect your community?

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Of course, sir.

Mr. GIMENEZ. OK. How about you, Chief Graves?

Chief GRAVES. Absolutely.

Mr. GIMENEZ. OK. Colonel.

Colonel HODGES. Yes, sir. I would just add an important point. With funding, always generous from the Federal Government, but ensure that we include continuous training and maintenance.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Correct.

Colonel HODGES. Those are often things that are overlooked. It's one-time training, one-time equipment. We need to protect that investment. More importantly, we need to continuously train as technology evolves and we need to protect that investment.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS. Absolutely, Congressman. These are vital investments in the future. This is a pending threat.

Mr. GIMENEZ. I agree. Sometimes we here in Congress think, well, gee, we have to fund everything, and I don't think we do. OK. We may help you. All right? But I think we also need to give you the authority and give you access to the technology and then have some kind of a, you know, overall umbrella saying in order to utilize it, you must meet these standards. But I know that, you know, if I were still the mayor of Miami-Dade County, I would make sure that my community is protected because I have too many assets that are vital to my community and are vital to my economy that—to wait for the Federal Government to give me what I need to do. So thank you for your testimony.

I am run out and I yield back.

Mr. MCCAUL. I thank the gentleman. I think that is going to be one of the greatest legislative takeaways of this hearing, is to have those authorities at the State and local level, your force multiplier.

The Chair recognizes the gentlemen from Arizona, Mr. Crane.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you guys for coming today. This is a very important topic, examination of major security incidents at mass gatherings.

You know, obviously we have got a bunch of big events coming up in the United States within the next couple years: The Olympics, World Cup, our 250th anniversary. I am aware that you guys, as law enforcement agents, you guys have been dealing with a bunch of threats for a very long time to include vehicle ramming attacks, IEDs, improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne IEDs, active shooters, cyber attacks. But the one that is keeping me up at night is the one that we keep talking about up here. That is as warfare has continued to evolve, the drone threat. I just don't think that we are ready.

I have sat in on a bunch of these hearings. I have had Classified hearings with some of our Federal agencies. What I can tell you is that we are not ready. I am going to do everything that I can to push for these authorizations that you guys need. But what I can tell you, and I know that you guys are probably aware of this, the Federal Government moves very slowly. Right now this type of authorization, to my knowledge, has to go through 3 committees up here.

I was interested, Colonel Hodges, in doing some research and finding out that in Louisiana, you guys just passed in June 2025, the We Will Act Act, which gives specifically trained State and local officers the authority to intercept and disable drones that pose a credible threat to public safety. I think that is fantastic. I hope that other States follow your lead. Have you guys had a chance to use any of the provisions under that authorization yet, Colonel?

Colonel HODGES. So in conjunction with our Federal partners prior to the passage of law, we did it throughout the Sugar Bowl, Super Bowl, and Mardi Gras season. Now that we have the authorization, not at that moment, we're finalizing our policy and procedures and protocols for State-wide compliance and ensure best practices. But I'm quite certain with the landscape of events that are coming this fall, that we'll be putting that law to law enforcement benefit.

Mr. CRANE. Have you guys had any pushback from the Federal agencies who typically control the air space and authorities with this State-passed legislation?

Colonel HODGES. No, sir. They've been very supportive and we have a great working relationship with the Federal partners. I think that's why we were successful over the last several months, both in New Orleans, but really across the State. Because we were able to work with them and use their technology in conjunction with our technology, we feel that we have a skill set that's ready to hit the ground running as soon as we finalize our policy.

Mr. CRANE. Chief Graves, have you talked to your State legislature and Governor about passing something similar?

Chief GRAVES. I'm not sure that we have anything in the works of passing something similar, but I will get with Colonel Hughes to try to get some of the language.

Mr. CRANE. Sheriff, how about yourself?

Sheriff CORDERO-STUTZ. Sir, we will be having that conversation in the upcoming legislature.

Mr. CRANE. One of the recommendations that I have made up here is that with FIFA and every sporting event that we can, we try and make sure it happens in a dome. For obvious reasons, I think that will drastically cut down the threat of drone attacks. But in doing some research, I think out of the 11 different stadiums that the FIFA World Cup is going to be held in, only 4 of them are in domes.

I believe, Colonel, you guys have one yourself. Is that correct?

Colonel HODGES. Although we're not host, we have a dome, we're not hosting a FIFA. But as you know, the watch parties and the other outdoor events that coincide bring a larger sometimes crowd than what's inside the stadium or dome. So the drone is still a challenge, even though inside, like the game itself for the Super

Bowl was indoor, everything indoors, the events throughout the week, as well as things that are associated with, you know, an event of this magnitude, FIFA will need outdoor coverage and TFRs throughout.

Mr. CRANE. Colonel, do you know how long it took to get that piece of legislation passed?

Colonel HODGES. Well, Governor Landrieu has been in just a little over 18 months and it was a priority of his to have that done. We knew right before the—I believe your membership tried to get it done prior to 2025, but were unsuccessful. But we're very appreciative of the effort to move forward.

I just wanted to add one comment about the drone with the detection and identification. Commissioner Davis talked about it. But that AI component, that technology which used to take days, now takes just hours and sometimes minutes to identify who the operator of the drone is, is equally as important to mitigate or to return the drone or to take down the drone, because otherwise, they're just going to go get another one and do the same thing. So I believe that's a technology we should—an investigative tool that we should embrace in conjunction with the counter-drone and other capabilities.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you, Colonel.

Mr. GIMENEZ [presiding]. I now recognize the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Carter.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all of our witnesses here today, especially Colonel Hodges from my great State of Louisiana. Thank you for being here, sir. Thank you all for being here.

In the early hours of New Year's Day, a 42-year-old U.S. citizen from Texas drove a rented Florida Ford F–150 pickup truck into a crowd on Bourbon Street in the French Quarter during the city's celebration. After crashing, he exited the vehicle, engaged in a shootout with law enforcement, before being fatally shot by courageous New Orleans police officers who rushed to the scene. I want to take this moment to personally thank the NOPD officers, Louisiana State Police, and other first responders for the heroic action that night. Sir, we cannot thank you and those other law enforcement agents enough for while most were running away from the danger, you were running into it, and we appreciate you.

This heinous act shattered the lives of victims and their families. It also exposed vulnerabilities in our urban security infrastructure and serves as a grim reminder of the evolving tactics of terrorism and terrorists and the potential for more catastrophic methods. Since that incident, I have worked with Representative Gimenez on the Department of Homeland Security Vehicular Terrorism Prevention and Mitigation Act, a critical piece of legislation designed to protect Americans from weaponized vehicles on our streets. In April, this committee passed this legislation as a proactive step toward safeguarding our citizens from the unimaginable. By enhancing our detection and response capabilities, we deter adversaries from contemplating heinous acts in our communities. I want to thank the committee for holding this hearing and I look forward to continue to work on ways to prevent and deter future attacks on large-scale events.

Colonel Hodges, you and I know, oh too well, that New Orleans is the greatest city in the world to host major sporting events. Visitors stay in hotels, walk to the Superdome, they leave and walk to the French Quarter and celebrate their team's victories or to drink away the loss of losing to the Saints. Doesn't happen as often as we like, but it happens and it is going to continue to happen more. This walkability combined with culture, food, and hospitality of New Orleans means that we are responsible for protecting countless mass gatherings throughout the year: Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest, French Quarter Fest, Essence Fest, Bowl games, concerts, the list goes on and on.

What can other cities learn from what we learned during this event while hosting World Cup matches, Olympics, and other events and public violence is a threat? What can we share with the rest of the world the great work that you did and how we prevent these measures going forward?

Colonel HODGES. Well, thank you for the question, Congressman. I think it's the collaboration between all branches of law enforcement or all levels, local, State, and Federal. No one worried about who's getting the credit, just acting as a force multiplier. It doesn't matter who's in charge. It doesn't matter the badge or the uniform, just that we all work collectively and that we share the information.

I think we were able to do that with the help of many others who had challenges before we learned those lessons. We had been working very closely throughout the year of 2024, prior to that, that New Year's Day—New Year's Eve attack. We had such a strong relationship with our partners in law enforcement. It's no secret that the crime in the city of New Orleans, violent crime, was down 40 percent at the time of that attack. So when it did happen, and we all collectively were already there for the Sugar Bowl and New Year's Eve, everyone knew, all the leaders in the room, we knew our capabilities, our limitations, and we leveraged that. Because we worked and trusted one another so much, that's how we were able to——

Mr. CARTER. Building trust and working together regardless of background, no fiefdoms, no one trying to take credit.

You testified about the tragedy that struck New Orleans on New Year's morning. The terrorists had placed bombs in ice chests along Bourbon Street, which, thankfully, did not detonate. But video showed people on Bourbon Street looking at the coolers and not reporting them as suspicious. How can law enforcement effectively communicate to the public to not only see things, but to say what you see when you see them? Report suspicious packages, but also let us know what you see so we can further protect.

Louisiana constantly faces threat from Mother Nature. We know these things come, but those we have to deal with in many cases after the fact, before the fact. But these terrorist acts, if people see things, if someone had seen that ice chest that was just sitting there, that could have meant the difference in finding this and saving even more lives. Thankfully, those things were not detonated, but your people were on the ground, they were working with law enforcement. Having science and technology, being able to go back and trace this terrorist's steps were helpful tools, correct?

Colonel HODGES. Yes, sir. I don't want to leave out the importance of building community trust and also the business partners. To your point, when they see something, to message it to us before it happens, whether they're a victim of a crime or they're a witness to a crime or they see something that's out of place, messaging that. I think we've done a good job and we have to earn the public's trust each and every day. But on that particular night, because we had all the resources and all the capabilities there, once we identified those 2 IED ice chests, we were quickly able to X-ray them and render them safe. Thankfully, to your point, that they weren't activated because the New Orleans police officers immediately engaged the driver of that truck and he never made it to that destination.

But the AI technology to rule out other potential threats because we were still trying to play the game a few hours later, ended up being delayed a day. But when you think about all the number of folks that were in town and to reassure the community that it was not only safe to come back to work, but safe to host that football game the following day, that trust is so important as well as the technology.

So I think sometimes we overlook that piece of the puzzle. But despite all of the technology and the number of officers, deputies, troopers, agents, if you don't have that public's trust and they're not coming to you with the information, we're not successful today.

Mr. CARTER. Well, my time is far expired and I thank you for your generosity. As I exit, I want to just again, thank you. Thank you. Thank you for the great work that you all did to protect the citizens and visitors of New Orleans. Know that this committee will do everything in our power to arm you with the technology and tools to continue doing the great work.

Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Mr. GIMENEZ. The gentleman yields.

I recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Swalwell.

Mr. SWALWELL. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you to each and every one of our witnesses today and the men and women, sworn officers, a part of your departments, who are responsible for making sure that these events are successes. As the son of a cop and a brother to 2 police officers and a former prosecutor myself, I know that although when the confetti comes down and the winning teams celebrate, we see the players who were a part of the victory, but we don't see the men and women in law enforcement who made sure that it was a safe and fun environment for everybody who witnessed or participated in it. So thank you for that.

My State, Mr. Chairman, California, over the next couple years, we will host, obviously in 2026, the World Cup. I think we have 8 games. Folks will see in February, Super Bowl LX, where the San Francisco 49ers will run an undefeated season and cap it off by winning the Super Bowl at home, something that has never happened. A perfect season and a victory in your own stadium. Of course, in 2028, the Olympics in Los Angeles. We expect the Bay Area may host some of the cricket matches. So we are ready to work with law enforcement and support its needs.

Chief Graves, I know you are looking at me as I am talking about the 49ers and you are talking about the Chiefs, and congratulations to you all on that win over the 49ers. I was only sur-

prised at the parade that you referenced that I didn't see the referees on the float because they were a part of the victory, too. But again, I do look forward to working with all of you coming up on this. This committee wants to be responsive to what the funding needs are going to be.

I want to ask first, Mr. Davis, you had referenced that the Fusion Center can be a force multiplier. You said to best safeguard against evolving threats, intelligence agencies must remain open to collaboration. If intelligence and analysis are eliminated or its capacity and capabilities to share intelligence with the Fusion Centers were reduced, would that make us safer? What impact would reducing the Fusion Center capabilities have on the safety of our communities?

Mr. DAVIS. Sorry. I think it would be devastating, Congressman. The Fusion Centers have become such an integral part of everything that we do, especially on the prevention side of things. If there's any inhibition to continuing their work, the United States will not be as safe as it could be. I will tell you that the analysis that comes out of those centers every day is the first thing I read when I was the police commissioner in the city of Boston. It informed all of our decisions and it helped us prevent serious crimes not only at the terrorism level, but also at the other levels that we deal with day-in and day-out crime.

So if that ability becomes impeded, either through a lack of funding or through the propensity of big organizations to snap back to all old practices, which is what I fear after the changes that we made in 12 years ago, whether or not there's a slow degradation of that cooperation, that has to be looked at all the time. The preventive work that can be done in the Fusion Centers outweighs what they are able to do afterwards.

Mr. SWALWELL. Mr. Davis, I also want to credit you, obviously for your work during the Boston Marathon bombings. But you had publicly credited at the time the Alameda County Sheriff's Office and its Urban Shield Program, which had worked with and your department had trained with for many years. That was a very public validation of a training program that has made our community and many communities safer. I know the community appreciated at the time you crediting that program.

Mr. DAVIS. Truly. It was funded by UASI grants that gave us the ability to prepare. You fight the way you train.

Mr. SWALWELL. That is right.

Mr. DAVIS. That's what it gave us the ability to do.

Mr. SWALWELL. Yes. Chief Graves, it is only fair I took a shot at the Chiefs, I do want to give you an opportunity to also respond to the question of reducing intelligence-sharing capabilities between your office and the Federal Government and what impact that could have.

Chief GRAVES. We have, like I said earlier, we have a great historical, positive working relationship with our Federal partners in Kansas City. That being said, the Fusion Center is an integral part of some of that communication. Not only do we work with them regularly, and I have no worries of getting notified of something that we should be aware of, we work side-by-side with them at Arrowhead Stadium during the football games. You know, there's

been a couple things that have been taken care of and handled right away. It would definitely inhibit our ability to maintain that open line of communication of emerging threats.

Mr. SWALWELL. Great. Thank you.

Chairman, I yield back. I thank the witnesses.

Mr. GIMENEZ. The gentleman yields. I will remind the gentleman from California there is only one undefeated team in NFL history, the greatest team in NFL history, the 1972 Miami Dolphins.

Mr. SWALWELL. But did they win the Super Bowl?

Mr. GIMENEZ. The Miami Dolphins, 1972. So probably before your time.

Mr. SWALWELL. Yes.

Mr. GIMENEZ. OK. The one thing I guess we learned from this hearing is that we need to move on authorizations. My colleague from Arizona was absolutely right. It takes too long for us here in Congress to push the legislation that is actually needed. This is a priority, giving you authorizations for you to do something about unmanned aerial systems. So I want to thank the witnesses for their valuable testimony and the Members for their questions.

The Members of the task force may have some additional questions for the witnesses. We would ask the witnesses to respond to these in writing. Pursuant to committee rule VII(E), the hearing record will be held open for 10 days.

Without objection, this task force stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:27 p.m., the task force was adjourned.]

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