



# CAN REPUBLICANS SAVE POLICING? CAN REPUBLICANS SAVE POLICING? - INSIDE SOURCES

Posted on January 7, 2025 by Paula Fitzsimmons | INSIDE SOURCES



*Image Source: ideogram.ai*

A years-long ideological war that's still in progress has left police officers severely battered. Elected officials and others attempt to eradicate their qualified immunity protections, wrongfully convict them for using justified force, mischaracterize them as tyrants, and try to micromanage them with federal consent decrees.

Officers are being shot at, ambushed, punched, stabbed, mowed down with cars, and attacked with chemical weaponry. Per FBI data, assaults on law enforcement officers have reached a 10-year high and show no sign of abating.

The effects on public safety have been disastrous and far-reaching. Police agencies nationwide are struggling to hire and retain qualified officers, which has prompted them to lower their hiring standards. For the citizenry, this may mean having inconsistent access to officers with the temperament, skills or desire to serve with integrity.

Staffing issues often translate to frequent mandatory overtime, which leads to burnout, an increased risk of committing errors, and less opportunity to engage positively with communities.

This landscape is unsustainable. The momentum is on the side of law and order heading into 2025. The electorate resoundingly voted with crime as a top issue in the past election. And Republicans, who have vowed to address public safety and support police officers will regain the balance of power.

Will these Republicans keep their campaign promises, or will we witness a repeat of last session's weak performance? While Democratic policies have contributed to the degradation of public safety and the demoralization of law enforcement, the Republican response has been dismal.

Republican legislators introduced bills in the 118th Congress that failed to move past the committee. One of these was the Protect & Serve Act, which would have created a federal crime category and minimal sentencing guidelines for knowingly assaulting a police officer. Yet, the bill was tabled in the Judiciary Committee by the Republican chair.

Other similar federal bills received a scant number of co-sponsors. These include the Local Law Enforcement Protection Act, which would protect qualified immunity for state and local officers (it gained just one co-sponsor, a Republican), and the Holding Prosecutors Accountable Act, which would prohibit district attorneys who fail to prosecute at least 67 percent of violent crime arrests from receiving Byrne grants (it gained three co-sponsors, all Republicans).



The Ride-Along Resolution would have required members of the House of Representatives to accompany a police officer for a patrol shift once per two-year term. Interacting with officers via ride-along provides valuable insights into police work, which is especially essential for elected officials tasked with creating policies that affect law enforcement and public safety. Yet, not one member of Congress signed on to this resolution.

Some may argue that attempting to pass meaningful legislation while not in power would have been futile. This time, however, the party of law and order has no excuses. With both chambers soon to be led by Republicans, we're in a prime position to ensure meaningful legislation is made available for the president's signature.

Members of Congress have an obligation — and a mandate — to prioritize legislation that better advocates for law enforcement and public safety. Given that it's unknown whether Republicans will be able to retain the balance of power in the mid-terms, they need to act expeditiously. There's much at stake for our nation, and the Republican Party has no time to waste.