

LEADERSHIP BREAKDOWN:

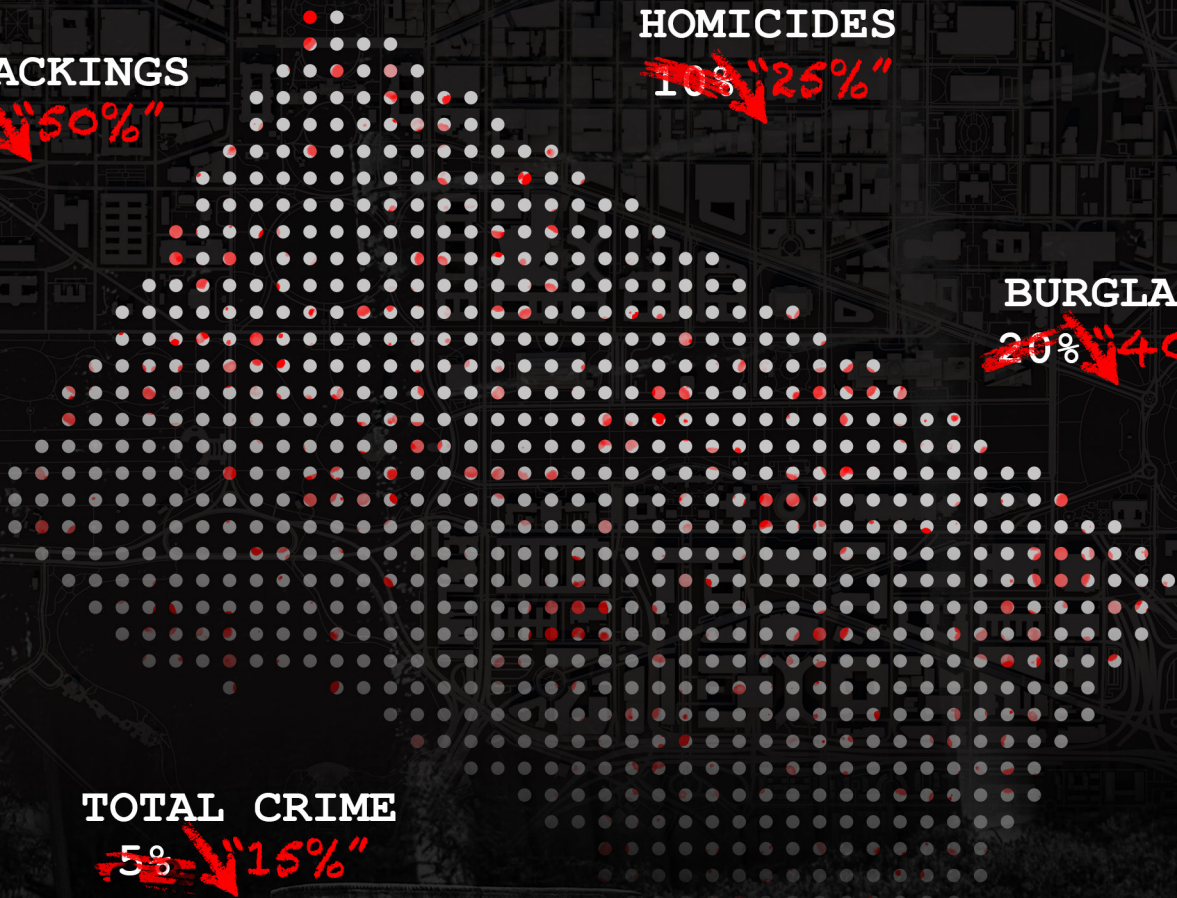
HOW D.C.'S POLICE CHIEF UNDERMINED CRIME DATA ACCURACY

CARJACKINGS
~~30%~~ "50%"

HOMICIDES
~~10%~~ "25%"

BURGLARY
~~20%~~ "40%"

TOTAL CRIME
~~5%~~ "15%"



Report Prepared by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Majority Staff

December 14, 2025

Executive Summary

On August 25, 2025, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (Committee) launched an investigation in response to reports of efforts to manipulate and lower publicly reported crime statistics in the District of Columbia (District).¹ Chairman James Comer (Chairman) wrote to Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Pamela A. Smith (Chief Smith), requesting transcribed interviews with all MPD district commanders (commanders).²

During October and November 2025, the Committee conducted eight transcribed interviews with the seven acting—and one suspended—MPD commanders. This is an interim report released following Chief Smith's December 8 resignation announcement.³ While the Committee continues to investigate documents related to crime statistics reporting, testimony exhibited in this report paints a troubling picture of department leadership placing a higher priority on suppressing public reporting of crime statistics than stopping crime itself.⁴

The Committee is releasing this interim report in light of Chief Smith's resignation to add context to this decision, to protect witnesses from retaliation, and to inform both District residents and the American public at large.

The Committee's ongoing investigation has heard testimonies from commanders that there are clear pressures placed on MPD personnel to lower the classifications of crime to present to the public the perception of low crime in the District. Specifically, there was an emphasis on the daily crime report (DCR), a public-facing dataset that only includes nine categories of felony offenses,⁵ above all other crimes discussed within the highest levels of the MPD. Chief Smith, the commanders testified, was so preoccupied with the statistics of the select crimes that were made public that she incentivized her subordinates to lower those crimes by whatever means necessary.⁶

MPD commanders' testimonies corroborated concerns about alleged manipulations of crime statistics. In fact, commanders told the Committee that, on numerous occasions, they were not only pressured, but also instructed, to lower crime classifications to lesser intermediate offenses in such a way that those offenses would not be included in the DCR reported to the public.⁷ In sharing this alarming information, the commanders, throughout their transcribed

¹ Paul Wagner, *DC police commander suspended, accused of changing crime statistics*, NBC NEWS4 WASH. (July 18, 2025).

² Letter from James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Gov't Reform, to Pamela A. Smith, Chief of Police, Metro. Police Dep't (Aug. 25, 2025).

³ News Release, Metro. Police Dep't, Statement from Chief of Police Pamela A. Smith (Dec. 8, 2025).

⁴ See Section I. Chief Smith's Pressure Campaigns on Command Staff Led to Inaccurate Reporting (Emphasis Added).

⁵ *D.C. Crime Cards*, Metro. Police Dep't, available at <https://crimecards.dc.gov/>; Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 18-22 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶ See Section I. Chief Smith's Pressure Campaigns on Command Staff Led to Inaccurate Reporting.

⁷ See Section I. Chief Smith's Pressure Campaigns on Command Staff Led to Inaccurate Reporting.

interviews, presented as seasoned law enforcement professionals who were credible and qualified to speak to the issues currently plaguing the MPD.

The Committee's investigation, which began as an inquiry into allegations of manipulation of crime statistics in the District, also uncovered concerning accounts about the deterioration of MPD leadership through the toxic management culture created by Chief Smith. The Committee's investigation heard consistent testimony about frustration and exhaustion among MPD commanders and the manifestation of a culture of fear, intimidation, threats, and retaliation by Chief Smith. Often, these manifestations were triggered whenever the Chief was presented with what she considers "bad news," particularly when that news pertained to any rise in public crime statistics.⁸ Chief Smith, according to testimonies, regularly took action against her subordinates who failed to aid in the preservation of her public image.⁹

During Chief Smith's tenure, the MPD suffered a drop in its reputation as a law enforcement agency.¹⁰ Chief Smith's failures as leader have negatively impacted the Department's ability to retain officers and commanders, many of whom devoted years of service to the MPD prior to Chief Smith. Commanders testified that retention problems have left the Department severely lacking in the ability to train and recruit future MPD leaders.¹¹

In the interests of the MPD district commanders, each of whom appeared voluntarily to testify before the Committee, the Committee has anonymized the transcribed interviews referenced in this report to protect the commanders from potential retaliatory actions.

⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 43:22-24 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁹ See Section I. Chief Smith's Pressure Campaigns on Command Staff Led to Inaccurate Reporting.

¹⁰ Matt Delaney, *D.C. residents not sold on crime crackdown despite police numbers that say otherwise*, THE WASHINGTON TIMES (Dec. 16, 2024); Ted Oberg, et al., *DC police union head tells why he doubts city crime statistics*, NBC4 WASHINGTON (updated on Aug. 12, 2025).

¹¹ Mia Cathell, *How DC Democrats hollowed out the capital's police force*, WASHINGTON EXAMINER (Aug. 22, 2025); *DC Police Face Historic Staffing Shortage Amid Rising Concerns*, THE DMV DAILY (Jan. 15, 2025).

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Background

On August 14, 2025, President Trump issued Executive Order 14333, *Declaring a Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia*.¹² The President authorized a federal law enforcement surge in the District to combat the high crime rates that have haunted the city for decades.¹³ The effects of Executive Order 14333 were twofold: first, the MPD was placed under the control of the U.S. Attorney General, and second, President Trump deployed D.C. National Guard to supplement the MPD's efforts to fight crime.¹⁴

After seeing early success from the federal surge, President Trump expanded federal assistance to D.C. law enforcement when he issued an Executive Order on Additional Measure to Address the Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia.¹⁵ This sweeping order brought to bear resources across government, including: (1) empowering the U.S. Park Police to enforce D.C. law; (2) directing the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia to hire additional prosecutors to focus on preventing violent crimes; (3) creating an online portal to help recruit law enforcement personnel to assist the D.C. crime effort, (4) directing the Secretary of Defense to deputize the D.C. National Guard to enforce federal law, and (5) instructing the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Transportation to ensure programs under their jurisdiction are being leveraged to stamp out crime.¹⁶

The Committee received testimony from district commanders that these efforts have been effective:

Commander E (November 2025)

Q. With the personnel issues, has the Federal surge been helpful?

A. Yes.

Q. In what ways?

A. Well, me personally, I'm sleeping a lot more and I'm getting a little bit more downtime, which I encourage, if anybody has any more Federal partners to bring to us, just tell them to go to [Commander E's district]. I would be happy to take on any more resources that I possibly could get. And then I think there's a -- yeah, the Federal

¹² Exec. Order No. 14333, 90 Fed. Reg. 39301 (Aug. 14, 2025).

¹³ Memorandum from the White House to the Secretary of Defense, *Restoring Law and Order in the District of Columbia* (Aug. 11, 2025).

¹⁴ Memorandum from the White House to the Secretary of Defense, *Restoring Law and Order in the District of Columbia* (Aug. 11, 2025).

¹⁵ Exec. Order No. 14339, 90 Fed. Reg. 42121 (Aug. 28, 2025).

¹⁶ Exec. Order No. 14339, 90 Fed. Reg. 42121 (Aug. 28, 2025).

surge is helping. They're helping with basically backfilling, which we're already reduced, and that's what's helping.¹⁷

Another commander testified to the same effect:

Commander F (November 2025)

A. ...[S]ince the Federal surge, and we have the Federal partners...they've been a force multiplier.¹⁸

A different commander expressed their support for President Trump's federal surge:

Commander H (November 2025)

Q. Have you found the surge to be helpful to you in your district?

A. Yeah. I would be lying if I said it didn't. It did. It really helped. It mainly helped my property crime numbers.¹⁹

The Committee, in its broad jurisdiction over the District, launched its investigation after receiving reports from reliable sources that senior officials at the MPD were deliberately lowering crime statistics prior to the President's federal surge. Critics of the President's surge had used crime statistics that claimed lower crime levels to argue that the surge was misguided.²⁰ The Chairman's letter to Chief Smith called to attention allegations of statistics manipulation and requested each of the seven acting district commanders, as well as one former commander currently placed on suspended leave, appear before the Committee for transcribed interviews.²¹

The Committee chose to interview district commanders because the commanders serve as conduits between each of the seven policing districts of the city and the command staff at the executive level. The MPD, like most police agencies and organizations, has a para-militaristic reporting structure.²² At the top is an executive team (hereinafter "command staff") led by the Chief of Police and consisting of executive assistant chiefs.²³ Below the command staff, the MPD is divided into two regions, Patrol Services North (PSN) and Patrol Services South (PSS),

¹⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 85:5-13 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

¹⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 72:7-8 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

¹⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander H, at 38:9-11 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²⁰ Gary Fields, *4 Takeaways from Trump's federal law enforcement surge in D.C. as his emergency order expires*, PBS NEWS (Sept. 10, 2025); Nik Popli, *Trump Took Over the D.C. Police. He Can't Do It In Other Cities, Legal Experts Say*, TIME (Aug. 12, 2025).

²¹ Letter from James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Gov't Reform, to Pamela A. Smith, Chief of Police, Metro. Police Dep't (Aug. 25, 2025).

²² Transcribed Interview of Commander G, at 16:7-19 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²³ Transcribed Interview of Commander G, at 16:7-19 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

headed by assistant chiefs who report to the command staff.²⁴ PSN and PSS are further broken down into seven geographic districts with a district commander leading day-to-day policing within their respective districts.²⁵ Each district commander reports to the assistant chief assigned to their Patrol Services region.²⁶

District commanders, as head of their geographic policing district, work with and serve as leader of the officers, lieutenants, sergeants, and watch commanders, among other roles, of their district.²⁷ Commanders answer for reported crimes within their district when pressed at mandatory daily crime briefings led by Chief Smith and other command staff.²⁸ Commanders have unique insights as they have both the knowledge of crimes occurring in their districts and the obligation to report those crimes to the command staff and Chief of Police who are not in that district every day. In other words, district commanders are the bridge between the MPD officers in the streets and the highest levels of the MPD.

The Committee, in conducting eight transcribed interviews with district commanders, found the commanders to be qualified, seasoned professionals of law enforcement. Their knowledge and expertise is expansive and includes, but is not limited to, various specialized achievements, extensive trainings, and significant management roles.²⁹ The commanders' experience in law enforcement ranges from 16 to 27 years. The Committee attributes much of the findings of its investigation thus far to the credible testimonies provided by these district commanders.

I. Chief Smith's Pressure Campaigns Against Her Staff Led to Inaccurate Reporting.

During Smith's time as Chief of Police, the Committee was made aware of allegations that senior MPD officials are deliberately falsifying publicly reported crime data to artificially lower public-facing crime rates in the District.³⁰

²⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 13:13-20 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²⁵ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 13:13-14 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²⁶ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 13:10-18 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 12:4-20 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 30:3-6 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

²⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 9:3-10:19 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 8:24-9:20 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander C, at 8:17-9:21 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 8:9-9:20 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 9:1-10:21 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of F, at 7:13-8:16 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander G, at 7:5-22 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); and Transcribed Interview of Commander H, at 7:20-8:16 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

³⁰ Letter from James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Gov't Reform, to Pamela A. Smith, Chief of Police, Metro. Police Dep't (Aug. 25, 2025).

The Committee heard testimony about deeply troubling priorities within the MPD: Chief Smith generally prioritized lowering the reportable public crime statistics over lowering actual crime levels on the streets of the District to such an extent that she placed an inordinate amount of pressure on district commanders to deliver low crime numbers by any means necessary. Commanders testified they regularly expected to be berated and embarrassed by Chief Smith in mandatory crime briefings if they brought news of an increase in reported crime numbers.³¹ Commanders also noted they believed their positions and livelihoods were dependent on reporting low crime numbers to Chief Smith.³² Various commanders testified to observing several of their fellow commanders being removed or demoted immediately following a negative crime report.³³

Chief Smith created expectations that many of the crimes specifically affecting public crime statistics upon their entry into MPD systems had to be reviewed by her and her assistant chiefs prior to their inclusion.³⁴ The commanders further testified to the Committee that Chief Smith, unlike other chiefs before her, instituted a push for the more frequent use of intermediate criminal charges. Intermediate charges are lower degree criminal charges that go unreported to the public by MPD, as opposed to more serious charges that have been included in the publicly reported statistics.³⁵ These combined efforts, as explained by commanders, amounted to manipulating MPD crime statistics in an effort to show lowered rates of crime to the public.

A. Chief Smith Improperly Emphasized Crime Statistics at the Expense of Accurate Reporting.

Multiple commanders testified it was clear to them that the public-facing violent crime numbers specifically were prioritized by Chief Smith above all else.³⁶ One commander explained what they perceived the true goals of the MPD executive command staff as such:

Commander B (October 2025)

Q. Would you say there is a difference between the priorities of the executive team between bringing crime down and bringing the statistics down?

³¹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 94:25-96:7 (Oct. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 43:22-24 (Nov. 13, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

³² See Section I. (B) Chief Smith Humiliated and Removed Officers Who Failed to Report Low Crime Numbers to Her.

³³ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 43:15-44:3 (Oct. 16, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

³⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 18:7-13 (Oct. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 62:16-63:8 (Nov. 19, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

³⁵ See Section I. Chief Smith's Pressure Campaigns on Command Staff Led to Inaccurate Reporting.

³⁶ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 34:5-13 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 73:9-17 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

- A. Is there a priority amongst the executive team?
- Q. Yes.**
- A. Absolutely. I mean, I think at the end of the fiscal calendar year that's the goal, is to have the lowest crime possible to report out to the mayor and to the city.³⁷

Another commander stated the current prioritization of lowering crime statistics specifically is new to the MPD under Chief Smith's tenure:

Commander A (October 2025)

- Q. Over the last few years, has there been any internal pressure to simply bring down crime statistics?**
- A. Yes, I mean extreme...there's always been pressure to keep crime down, but the focus on statistics... has come in with this current administration or regime, and you know, that has manifested publicly.³⁸

Testimony to the Committee has shown Chief Smith regularly chose to prioritize the public appearance of crime statistics, and, in doing so, failed to address actual solutions to reduce crime. One commander testified to Chief Smith's apparent lack of interest in addressing issues in their high-violent crime district.³⁹ In the nearly two years she has served as Chief of Police, the commander could recall only one occasion when Chief Smith visited their district and its officers.⁴⁰ Commander B, who was absent the day of Chief Smith's brief visit, recounted what fellow officers said about her visit:

Commander B (October 2025)

- A: And the premise that was described to me after the fact [by my officers] when I came back to work in a couple days was, that's the first time we've ever seen the police chief at [this district]. Been the chief almost two years. So the officers recognize it, they see it, and they feel it.⁴¹

Commanders testified that Chief Smith established expectations that commanders must make their superiors aware—who in turn must communicate to Chief Smith—that the crimes

³⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 34:5-10 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

³⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 29:22-30:2 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

³⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 10:4-7 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁰ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 106:1-9 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴¹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 106:6-9 (Oct. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).

which will affect MPD data reports have occurred.⁴² Chief Smith required that she be informed of such crime reports prior to them being classified in the system.⁴³ Commanders are required to engage in this arduous approval process immediately upon learning of the crime and prior to the crime being put into the MPD records system, where it can impact public statistics.⁴⁴ This process for managing the reporting of crimes removed time and resources from investigating and fighting the crime itself. Chief Smith even mandated that steps to manage how crimes would be reported be taken prior to crimes being subject to investigation by a detective.⁴⁵

Commander A remarked this process could lead to directions from Chief Smith to her executive assistant chiefs, and, subsequently to the commanders, that certain classifications need to be changed.⁴⁶ Commander A, in describing one of those instances, explained they were instructed to reduce an assault with a dangerous weapon (ADW) offense to an endangerment with a firearm offense—in other words, from a crime that is reported to the public to one that is not:

Commander A (October 2025)

A. During one of those instances... he called about an ADW, assault with a dangerous weapon, for shooting where nobody was hit, I briefed out my patrol chief. He called the executive assistant chief. And when he called me back, he said, Well, it sounds like you have an endangerment with a firearm. And I said, Well, are you asking me or telling me, because I briefed you on what I had? And when I said that... he responded, [an Executive Assistant Chief] says, You have an endangerment with a firearm. I said, Okay. So that was the classification.⁴⁷

Prior to Chief Smith, commanders testified that there were very limited circumstances under which district commanders, command staff, or the Chief of Police would become involved with crime classifications⁴⁸; those instances usually only arose if certain violent crimes occurred or if an officer under their command made a mistake.⁴⁹ Chief Smith suspended this customary practice and instead increased control over the classifications that would become one of the nine felony offenses reported to the public *before* they could impact those public statistics. Commander A continued:

Commander A (October 2025)

⁴² Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 18:7-13 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴³ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 18:7-13 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 62:5-8 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁵ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 67:12-21 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁶ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 21:3-10 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 21:11-18 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander C, at 29:22-30:1 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 65:6-9 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁴⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 16:24-17:8 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 60:11-25 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

Q. In that instance, are these conversations happening in real time? As an officer is on the scene, this -- these conversations are then immediately happening?

A. Yes...the chief has required that this happens before a classification is made and numbers are drawn for those offenses. This is new to this chief and these executives. This is never something that's occurred before in our agency.⁵⁰

The commanders' testimony spoke to the alarming nature of Chief Smith's administration when it came to ensuring crime classifications did not affect the statistics. However, Chief Smith placed pressure on the classification process using another tool as well—intermediary charges.

In recent years, the D.C. Council implemented laws to create new categories of criminal offenses. The new categories mostly consist of intermediate crimes. Intermediate crimes are crime classifications which can be used to categorize offenses that fall between a serious offense and a minor offense.⁵¹ While the implementation of intermediate charges can certainly be helpful for prosecution purposes, there is significant potential for these charges to be misapplied, which can lead to a crime being treated less seriously than one might expect.

An example of a recently created intermediary charge is endangerment with a firearm, wherein a firearm is recklessly discharged but does not result in a bullet hitting a person.⁵² The creation of the endangerment with a firearm charge provides officers a charge that falls between an assault with a deadly weapon (ADW) and a simple assault.⁵³ While ADWs are reported publicly, endangerment with a firearm and simple assault offenses are not.⁵⁴ When the Committee asked whether there was any pressure from Chief Smith to classify or re-classify ADW offenses to non-reported offenses, Commander A replied they felt that pressure:

Commander A (October 2025)

A: Yes there is always pressure to get to those...unreported offenses. And these are offenses that we could report to the public as violent crimes – they are defined as violent crimes, if we have the data on them. It's just I don't think anybody has wanted to be in the seat when we start reporting these to the public and the numbers don't look as good.

Q: Do you notice a trend towards a lot of the pressure to the nonreported numbers?

⁵⁰ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 21:19-24 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff) (Emphasis Added).

⁵¹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 76:18-77:3 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁵² D.C. Code §22-4503.03.

⁵³ D.C. Code §22-402.

⁵⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 22:8-12 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

[...]

A: [Y]eah, I do think that there is a direction to get away from the ADW because, again, the focus of this executive management has been on the crime numbers.⁵⁵

Commander A elaborated:

Commander A (October 2025)

A. I mean, I think that the way the department has directed us to use [the endangerment with a firearm classification] is inappropriate.⁵⁶

Commander B further testified that they saw the same pattern of pressure to lower classifications of burglaries, which is a publicly reported offense on the DCR, to unlawful entry, an offense that is not reported to the public:

Commander B (October 2025)

A. When I first took over the district, I would see a call come in for a burglary and then I would look on my watch commander report, and I would see that it was classified as an unlawful entry and a theft. It piqued my interest. I'd go read the report, and it would read like a burglary. It would say so and so came home after a day out and found their door open and their TV missing from their wall. That's the elements of a burglary. Is it also an unlawful entry and a theft? Technically. But the proper charge would be burglary, but unlawful entry doesn't hit the DCR status of burglary. So maybe my burglaries are down now even though I had a ton of unlawful entries.⁵⁷

The Committee then followed up with Commander B, asking whether increasing non-reported offenses impacted Chief Smith's daily crime reports:

Commander B (October 2025)

Q. So we've spoken a bit about the intermediate offenses that have been put into place, the felony assault. That is not reported in the DCR, correct?

A. It's not.

⁵⁵ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 36:10-17, 36:25-37:1 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁵⁶ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 22:20-21 (Oct. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁵⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 126:5-13 (Oct. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).

Q. So if the year-to-year analysis shows that ADWs have gone down, just throwing a number out there, 20 percent, but this was potentially the cause of more use of a felony assault, meaning you're going to have different numbers, the ADWs will go down because potentially there's more felony assaults, but those are not recorded. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.⁵⁸

Several other commanders corroborated this testimony by explaining intermediate charges are not included in the daily crime reports reported out by Chief Smith and the MPD.⁵⁹

By pressuring her command staff to alter classifications for the sole purpose of artificially reducing crime numbers reported out to the public, Chief Smith incentivized the manipulation of crime numbers, which do not adequately account for the crime taking place in D.C.

B. Chief Smith Humiliated and Removed Officers Who Failed to Report Low Crime Numbers to Her.

In addition to the pressures applied by Chief Smith to misclassify crimes in order to report the lowest crime numbers possible, the Committee found that Chief Smith often doled out threats and punishments and retaliated against MPD personnel that presented her with spikes in crime.

Commanders told the Committee they were required to prepare for and attend mandatory crime briefings where they were scrutinized, both in person twice weekly and via video calls three additional times per week, in front of all their colleagues, for high crime numbers.⁶⁰ Presenting Chief Smith with spikes in publicly reported crimes would often lead to individual meetings in which commanders or assistant chiefs were again berated and pressured by Chief Smith and her command staff to improve their crime numbers.⁶¹

At Chief Smith's direction, twice per week, each commander stood before Chief Smith and the command staff and faced the possibility of beratement in front of all attendees for their district's crime spikes. As one commander told the Committee:

Commander B (October 2025)

⁵⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 124:23-125:6 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁵⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 63:22-64:4 (Nov. 2025); Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 48:9-12 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶⁰ Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 32:2-8 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶¹ See Section II. Chief Smith Propagated a Culture of Toxicity during her Tenure at MPD.

A. [The briefings are] really an atonement for our sins.⁶²

When queried by the Committee as to the stress placed on commanders in their preparing for briefings, one commander testified that they spent so much time preparing for each briefing because they felt the need to defend themselves in that room.⁶³ Another commander described the disposition of the crime briefings even more clearly:

Commander A (October 2025)

A. [The internal pressure] even manifests publicly in these briefings where commanders, you know, have been, you know, dressed down in front of all other members of command staff -- support, civilians -- based on crime that has occurred in their district. And, you know, crime, unfortunately, is kind of something that does happen and it is inevitably going to happen. We do the best we can using data to prevent it, but it has -- there's extreme pressure. People have been humiliated publicly by our chief[sic] and assistant chiefs, based on crime that's occurred in their districts.⁶⁴

Chief Smith regularly dressed down career police officers in the crime briefings. Her use of humiliation tactics against commanders who reported crime spikes created clear pressure to keep reportable public crime numbers low. The commander continued:

Commander A (October 2025)

Q. So in executive management briefings, how would you characterize what happens when crime is up if the chief is upset about numbers? What occurs?

A. ...[I]n front of everybody, professional staff, all of us, there's a lot of criticism that occurs publicly.⁶⁵

Briefings with Chief Smith involved public chastisement to the point commanders expressed feeling like they were being treated as if they had committed the crimes themselves.⁶⁶ A different Commander testified as to the difference in reaction by Chief Smith when presented with spikes in publicly reported crimes versus non-reported crimes:

⁶² Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 14:20 (Nov. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶³ Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 62:21-23 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 30:4-10 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶⁵ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 43:3-6 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶⁶ Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 36:12-13 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander F, at 34:21-22 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

Commander E (October 2025)

Q. Would you say there could be a difference in how upset the chief would be if it's between a spike in a DCR crime and a non-DCR crime?

A. You know, DCR crimes...are reported. Those are the ones that everybody focuses on. And your question was, do I see a difference?

Q. Yes. If Chief Smith were present at the briefing and heard about a spike in a crime that is a DCR publicly listed crime and then heard a spike in a non-DCR crime, does one take priority, in terms of how frustrated or upset [she] might be?

A. Yes. DCR crimes would – they would be upset with the DCR crimes.

Q. And why do you think that is?

A. Because those are the reported crimes that are out there, that we have to report out on.⁶⁷

The Committee heard testimony from commanders that Chief Smith engaged in retribution in the form of retaliatory transfers and demotions against various MPD officials. According to multiple commanders, Chief Smith either threatened to take or took action to remove or transfer MPD personnel who did not present her with favorable crime statistics or who—in Chief Smith’s judgement—questioned her actions. As one commander described:

Commander A (October 2025)

A. [T]here was a Monday in [one district] where crime had occurred over the weekend. We had some spree offenses and, I think, burglaries and some robberies. [Commander E] was up there, and [they] briefed on what had occurred. [They] talked about whether there may have been some failures with the officers, you know, we up their deployment strategy, what it's going to do to correct it, and [they] just got reamed. And it was just -- there was in front of everybody, and that if [they] couldn't control the crime in [their] district, she would bring in somebody who could. [Commander E] wouldn't be briefing the next week.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 66:9-17 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁶⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 43:6-14 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

When the Committee followed up with Commander E regarding their experiences of beratement by the Chief and her displeasure with the commander's district experiencing a crime uptick, they corroborated Commander A's statements:

Commander E (November 2025)

- A. On two occasions I had. . . robbery spree, and I think I had, like, 13 robberies in over a night period, a day period.
- And, yeah, I was - usually you have, there's -- an order of how you brief out, but at the very beginning of the crime briefing, the chief said, "I need to see [Commander E] up front to brief first."
- So I got up there and I was basically admonished. I was like, "How could I let these robberies happen?" It was embarrassing, but it happened. And then it stemmed other meetings after that to sit down and kind of drill down to what's happening.
- I did feel like I did the robberies after I left. I literally was, like, I swear I did not commit them.⁶⁹

Commander A provided further insight as to the pattern of retaliation:

Commander A (October 2025)

- Q. ...[W]ould you say there was a pattern of retaliation?**
- A. Yes...The Chief of Police, you know, she has kind of her people...[A]t our level, we have to be able to have difficult conversations to talk about different aspects of the problem to try to come up with the best, comprehensive response. This is now seen as disloyalty, and people are removed. [Assistant] Chief Robinson was removed for that. You know, we've had commanders who have been moved out of their commands for, you know, legitimate questions or suggestions that was seen as disloyal.
- The chief has removed people who would speak try to advise her on things that she didn't want to hear from her inner circle. She very much has an enabling, like, echo chamber around her now, which is out of touch with the reality of the agency and what the experience of our personnel and our officers and sergeants and managers at all levels are experiencing. And really, my job is to keep that off of my teams.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 36:4-13 (Nov. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁷⁰ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 43:15-44:3 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

Chief Smith not only moved and demoted officials, but she also created an atmosphere of unpredictability. One commander spoke to the capriciousness of Chief Smith's personnel practices and that she even declared it would be better for commanders to "make something up" than not have an answer:

Commander B (October 2025)

- A. We saw that happen again with...Commander Daniel Godin, who was the commander of our Youth and Family Engagement Bureau. We were in a command briefing, and he was briefing out on simply a fight that occurred in a hallway of some synonymous school somewhere in D.C. that happened over the weekend. Chief immediately stopped him and said, Wait a minute, why am I not why didn't I hear about this fight before right now?

[...]

Well, the reality of it is he didn't find out about it until the morning of that briefing, right? Apparently somebody, one of his team found out about it Friday, they briefed him on it Monday, he didn't have a reporting out on it to the chief the same day, and she calls him out in the middle of the meeting and says, Why didn't I not hear about this until right now? Well, his answer was true, Chief, I don't have a good answer for you. And she immediately stops him and goes, go sit down, that's unacceptable. And he turns around and walks away, and you can hear her, she's talking openly to the entire executive staff, Well, you know, don't have an answer, I would rather him make something up than tell me that. That was stupid to say. The very next day he gets transferred to the Office of Unified Command to be a dispatcher supervisor while Duncan gets transferred to Evidence Control Branch to supervise boxes, right?

[...]

He retired immediately after. So now we take a guy who had a stellar career, good guy, now he leaves because he's frustrated.⁷¹

Chief Smith, in addition to open degradation of and retaliation against seasoned MPD officials at briefings, would make a point to hold individual meetings immediately before and after briefings with commanders who were planning to or did present an increase in crime numbers.⁷² Commander B provided an example of Chief Smith's retaliation against a previous assistant chief who disagreed with her in briefings:

⁷¹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 96:8-97:6 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁷² Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 97:13-22 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

Commander B (October 2025)

A. Chief Darnel Robinson was promoted to chief, assistant chief...He was very vocal about standing up for what he believed was right. And one morning, we all sat in the crime briefing and waited and waited and waited, it never started.

[...]

About 30 minutes later him and Chief Smith came into the crime briefing, the very next day he was transferred to the Technical and Analytical Services Bureau, which is a fancy word for IT. So he's now the commander of IT.

[...]

He was the former 6D commander. One of the most respected people in the police department. So I'll put it at that.⁷³

A different commander provided yet another example of an unwarranted transfer at the behest of Chief Smith's intolerance for "bad news":

Commander D (November 2025)

Q. And when you say that they aren't -- bad news is not received well, do you mean by Chief Smith?

A. Yes.

Q. And have you seen any instances with other commanders who are reporting upticks or bad news, have that not be received well also by Chief Smith?

A. Yes.

[...]

Q. Have you had conversations with any of your colleagues about some of these transfers?

A. It's talked about, widely talked about on the Department, discussed.

⁷³ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 97:13-22 (Oct. 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

Q. Do you think there's a fear of, if the numbers go up, there's a chance to be transferred or moved out of the role that you're in?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you think that's always warranted?

A. No.

Q. Do you think that that fear seeps into the meetings? Does everyone feel that in the meeting?

A. Yes.⁷⁴

Chief Smith's aggressive oversight and daily pressures, coupled with the looming threat of losing their jobs and thus, their livelihood,⁷⁵ created a clear dynamic where commanders felt that reporting the reality of high crime numbers could result in retribution.

II. Chief Smith Propagated a Culture of Toxicity During Her Tenure at MPD.

The Committee heard consistent testimony that Chief Smith, in her two years leading the MPD, propagated an ecosystem of fear, retaliation, and toxicity. Chief Smith's approach to management has been an unfortunate blemish to the MPD's reputation and potential safety to DC residents. Commanders frequently feared for their jobs when having to brief Chief Smith on a rise in crime.⁷⁶

Throughout the Committee's transcribed interviews, the commanders expressed various frustrations with Chief Smith and the command staff. These frustrations included the lack of transparency with Chief Smith's executive team, the embarrassment of chastisement and humiliation in crime briefings, the fears of demotion or transfers resulting from delivering "bad news," the absence of collaboration and healthy disagreement, and the overall morale of the department being subject to the whims of Chief Smith's mood.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 43:22-44:1-2 (Nov. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 44:19-45:1-4 (Nov. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁷⁵ See Section II. Chief Smith Propagated a Culture of Toxicity during her Tenure at MPD.

⁷⁶ See Section I. (B) Chief Smith Humiliated and Removed Officers Who Failed to Report Low Crime Numbers to Her.

⁷⁷ Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 43:22-45:4 (Nov. 13, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

For example, many commanders drew contrasts between the crime briefing system of Chief Smith and that of chiefs preceding her.⁷⁸ Nearly all commanders compared Chief Smith's daily briefing system unfavorably to the previous weekly briefing system of former Chief of Police Robert J. Contee III.⁷⁹ Indeed, MPD Chiefs of Police have maintained essentially the same format for once-a-week crime briefings since Chief Ramsey introduced it in the 1990s—until Chief Smith.⁸⁰

Compared to the original purpose of weekly briefings (i.e., to streamline communication and raise significant issues to the highest levels of the MPD), Chief Smith's insistence on daily updates from the most senior leadership took significant time but actually degraded communication, collaboration, and morale. Whereas prior to Chief Smith, the crime briefings served as "a way to assess crime with his executive team and kind of have a group think,"⁸¹ Chief Smith's crime briefings acted as a forum for Chief Smith to press her agenda and humiliate subordinates who failed to hue or edits or delivered bad news.

Chief Smith, as a general matter according to testimony, did not communicate with district commanders outside the crime briefings.⁸² Commanders testified that Chief Smith maintained a closed-door policy:

Commander B (October 2025)

Q. [H]ow would you describe the culture at MPD since the change...to Chief Smith?

A. I mean, it's very closed off. The chief does not talk to us directly...it's always through an assistant chief. Very rarely...have I ever had a conversation with the chief unless it was menial in passing or an elevator ride. Maybe that's intentional, maybe it's not. I don't know. ...[I]t just seems like there's a lot more happening behind closed doors that we don't know about as command staff than maybe we did at this time a couple years ago.⁸³

One commander offered a harsh assessment of the senior-level MPD culture under Chief Smith:

Commander A (October 2025)

Q. How would you characterize the culture at the Metropolitan Police Department...?

⁷⁸ Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 34:13-18 (Nov. 13, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 31:4-20 (Nov. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁷⁹ Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 34:13-18 (Nov. 13, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff); Transcribed Interview of Commander E, at 31:8-25 (Nov. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁸⁰ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 37:18-25 (Oct. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁸¹ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 37:12-14 (Oct. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁸² Transcribed Interview of Commander D, at 47:7-18 (Nov. 13, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁸³ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 36:19-37:3 (Oct. 17, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

A. ...Toxic.⁸⁴

One Commander provided examples to the Committee illustrating that current officers are making significant career changes simply to avoid working for the MPD under Chief Smith:

Commander B (October 2025)

Q. This culture that you're explaining, is that felt with your rank and file officers? Do they understand the difficulties?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Okay. Would you say this is a contributing factor to the recruitment and retention issues that MPD has?

A. Yes.

Q. Are you aware of any officers choosing to take a lateral move or retire early, essentially depart MPD, citing any of the cultural reasons as reasons for leaving?

A. Yes.

Q. Could you speak more to that?

A. ...[Danny Godin] should have done 30 years on this department. He's a brilliant guy. He left because of what he described was toxicity at the chief's level, right? I'm leaving because I don't like who I'm working for right now, right? I mean, I've read enough leadership books over the years to know that people don't quit their jobs, they quit their bosses...⁸⁵

The Committee was disturbed to find that MPD career officials—particularly commanders with decades of experience and are the bridge between MPD headquarters and the officers in the streets—determined they would prefer to retire early rather than work under the leadership of Chief Smith. The toxicity Chief Smith injected into the MPD is, to the Committee's knowledge, unprecedented, and it is alarming that Chief Smith's own commanders could not bear the environment she created:

Commander B (October 2025)

⁸⁴ Transcribed Interview of Commander A, at 40:13-15 (Oct. 16, 2025) (On file with Comm. Staff).

⁸⁵ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 104:13-105:8 (Oct. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).

A. I'm going to be honest... I'm over my 2-5 year mark, I'm planning on leaving the police department, right? Not because I don't love this job. This is the only thing I've ever wanted to do my entire life. I would do it another 20 years if I could, but not here. I'm not going to do it here. I might do it somewhere else, you know what I mean, and that's just because I feel like I have a toxic executive staff.⁸⁶

III. Conclusion

Crime classifications—which affect reported MPD crime data—have been and are still at risk of being artificially reduced to manipulate crime statistics at the expense of public safety even after Chief Smith’s resignation.

The Committee credits the MPD commanders’ willingness to aid the Committee in its investigation and views them as a solid foundation for righting the woes of the police department serving our nation’s capital.

The Committee will continue to seek and review documents to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how, and to what extent, use of new intermediary crime categories and other manipulations were used to suppress reporting of serious crimes as described by MPD commanders. D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser should appoint a new Chief of Police to the MPD who will address the ongoing concerns of crime statistics manipulations and alleviate the retaliatory pressures and threats faced by MPD personnel.

⁸⁶ Transcribed Interview of Commander B, at 97:7-11 (Oct. 2025) (Emphasis added) (On file with Comm. Staff).