

Chairman Peters Opening Statement As Prepared for Delivery
Full Committee Hearing: Domestic Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Examining the
Threat of Racially, Ethnically, Religiously, and Politically Motivated Attacks, Part II
August 5, 2021

Earlier this week, the Committee heard testimony about the serious threat posed by domestic terrorism, and the impact it has on communities across the country.

Today, we will continue to examine this grave national security threat, and hear from experts representing community and research organizations, as well as former government officials – about the evolving nature of this threat and how the federal government can better address it.

The information we gather from these two hearings will lay important groundwork for a September hearing with current government officials, including FBI Director Wray and DHS Secretary Mayorkas, about what actions our federal agencies are taking to deal with the rising threat of domestic terrorism.

I would like to thank each of our witnesses for joining us today, and for their work in the public and private sectors to protect the American people. I look forward to hearing your analysis of rising domestic violent extremism, and your recommendations to ensure we are effectively tackling this deadly threat.

On Tuesday, we heard examples of horrific attacks, and the roots of that violence, from faith-based, civil rights, academic, and policy research organizations. The witnesses discussed how this rising violence has affected Asian American, Black, Latino, Arab American and so many other communities, as well as the disturbing rise in anti-Semitic and other faith-based violence.

The testimony we heard made it crystal clear that too many Americans are living under the threat of terror, intimidation, and physical violence that should cause concern for every American.

We also heard testimony about the about the role social media has played in amplifying and spreading hateful rhetoric and misinformation that contributes to increased violent attacks – motivated by ethnicity, race, religion, and politics.

I look forward to building on that testimony today, and continuing to dig into what domestic terrorism data the federal government tracks, whether we should be examining additional authorities, and how we can establish enduring federal policies that will put an end to the violence that is terrorizing our communities.