

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-6906
judiciary.house.gov

November 7, 2024

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Director Wray:

In September 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data purporting to show a 2.1 percent decrease in violent crime across the country from 2021 to 2022.¹ Last month, however, FBI revised its 2022 data to show that violent crime had actually *increased* by 4.5 percent from 2021.² We write to request more information about the FBI's after-the-fact revision of data to show that violent crime rose in 2022.

The FBI did not publicize its revision of 2022 violent crime data, and the only way to see this change is to download the FBI's updated crime data and compare it to the previous year.³ The FBI, instead, disclosed the revision in a footnote to its 2023 UCR Crime in the Nation Survey, which stated the original 2022 numbers had been "updated."⁴ This update included thousands of murders, rapes and other violent crimes that were originally omitted from the FBI's crime data.⁵ The FBI did not mention this significant data revision in its press release about violent crime data for 2023.⁶

The FBI's revision of violent crime data confirms what our oversight has shown: the Biden-Harris crime epidemic continues to escalate and far-left state and local policymakers place

¹ Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Releases 2023 Crime in the Nation Statistics* (Sep. 23, 2024), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-2023-crime-in-the-nation-statistics>.

² John R. Lott Jr., *Stealth Edit: FBI Quietly Revises Violent Crime Stats*, REAL CLEAR INVESTIGATIONS (Oct. 16, 2024).

³ U.S. Dep't of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Crime Data Explorer, <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend> (last visited Oct. 22, 2024).

⁴ John R. Lott Jr., *Stealth Edit: FBI Quietly Revises Violent Crime Stats*, REAL CLEAR INVESTIGATIONS (Oct. 16, 2024).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Releases 2023 Crime in the Nation Statistics* (Sep. 23, 2024), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-2023-crime-in-the-nation-statistics>.

the interests of criminals over the needs of their communities.⁷ Radical pro-criminal policies, including defunding the police and bail reform, make it harder to put violent offenders behind bars and keep them out of American neighborhoods.⁸ While the Biden-Harris Administration claims that crime is down, a reported 40 percent of Americans said in 2023 they are afraid to walk alone at night even within very close proximity of their home—the highest percentage in 30 years.⁹ In addition, according to one estimate, over 30 percent of police departments nationwide did not report their crime data to the FBI—one of the two main measurements of crime in the country.¹⁰

The initial 2022 data, before it was corrected, was heralded as “historic declines” in the crime rate.¹¹ Despite having the true data, the FBI never issued a clarification while the incorrect statistics were used to push a false narrative. Media even used the incorrect data to “fact check” President Trump’s correct assertion at the time that violent crime had risen during the Biden-Harris Administration.¹²

The FBI’s failure to be transparent about violent crime data continues to erode the American people’s trust and raises questions about the agency’s procedures used to track and update the UCR. Americans have known all along what the FBI is now finally reporting—crime is continuing to escalate across the country and Americans do not feel safe in their communities. To assist the Committee and the Subcommittee in conducting our oversight, please provide the following material:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to the FBI’s process for updating the 2022 UCR data.
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to the actions taken by the FBI to publicly correct the misstatement that crime in 2022 had decreased in the United States.

Please provide this information as soon as possible but not later than 5:00 p.m. on November 21, 2024.

In addition, we ask that you arrange a staff-level briefing to discuss the FBI’s review of pertinent FBI procedures and protocols involving UCR statistics for years 2022 and 2023 and the FBI’s process of discovering errors in the 2022 UCR statistics and their plans to improve their

⁷ STAFF OF H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY, 118TH CONG., VIOLENT CRIME IN AMERICA: HOW THE PRO-CRIMINAL, ANTI-LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES EMBRACED BY THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION ENDANGER ALL AMERICANS (2024).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Lydia Saad, *Personal Safety Fears at Three-Decade High in U.S.*, GALLUP (Nov. 16, 2023).

¹⁰ John R. Lott Jr., *The Media Say Crime Is Going Down. Don’t Believe It*, WALL ST. J. (Apr. 24, 2024).

¹¹ Press Release, The White House, *Statement from President Joe Biden on Record Declines in Crime* (Sep. 23, 2024), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/09/23/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-record-declines-in-crime/>.

¹² Riley Hoffman, *READ: Harris-Trump presidential debate transcript*, ABC NEWS (Sep. 10, 2024).

gross negligence going forward. This briefing should include, but will not be limited to, the following topics:

- What process does the FBI use to review UCR statistics, and how does it account for the lack of reporting of violent crime data by major cities and jurisdictions?
- Which jurisdictions with a population of 200,000 residents or more failed to report crime data to the FBI for the years 2021, 2022, or 2023? Please identify each year each jurisdiction failed to report crime data. How many of these jurisdictions provide incomplete data to the FBI?
- Which jurisdictions with a population less than 200,000 residents failed to report crime data to the FBI for the years 2021, 2022, or 2023? Please identify each year each jurisdiction failed to report crime data. How many of these jurisdictions provide incomplete data to the FBI?
- What review, if any, is the FBI undertaking to ascertain how the 2022 UCR report went riddled with errors before new data was included?
- When, if ever, has the FBI revised UCR statistics for previous years?
- What steps is the FBI taking to correct the misinformation disseminated after the UCR statistics are updated?
- What steps is the FBI taking to assure the 2023 UCR report will not contain such misleading errors?

Please arrange for this briefing to occur as soon as possible, but no later than November 21, 2024.

The Committee on the Judiciary has oversight jurisdiction over the Department of Justice and the FBI pursuant to Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives.¹³ If you have any questions about this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman



Andy Biggs
Chair

Subcommittee on Crime and Federal
Government Surveillance

¹³ Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, R. X (2023).

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray

November 7, 2024

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cc: The Honorable Jerrold Nadler, Ranking Member
The Honorable Lucy McBath, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Crime and Federal
Government Surveillance