

## **The Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act**

### **Sponsored by Senator Dick Durbin and Representative Brad Schneider**

The Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act would enhance the federal government's efforts to prevent domestic terrorism by requiring federal law enforcement agencies to regularly assess the threat posed by white supremacists and other violent domestic extremists and take concrete steps to address this threat.

#### **Growing Domestic Terrorism Threat**

In 2012, the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights held a hearing on the threat of violent extremism after a white supremacist murdered seven worshippers at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Since then, the threat has worsened. In March 2021, shortly after the January 6 attack on the Capitol, Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Durbin convened a domestic terrorism hearing at which FBI Director Christopher Wray testified that the threat of domestic terrorism is "metastasizing" throughout the country.

According to a March 2021 report by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the two most lethal threats among Domestic Violent Extremists (DVEs) are (1) racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists (RMVEs); and (2) militia violent extremists (MVEs, a type of anti-government or anti-authority violent extremists). The Intelligence Community also assessed that RMVEs constitute the class of DVEs most likely to conduct mass-casualty attacks against civilians. Recent attacks include the 2022 shooting at a Tops Friendly Markets in Buffalo; the 2019 shooting at an El Paso Walmart; the 2019 shooting at the Chabad of Poway synagogue in Poway, California; and the 2018 mass shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh.

#### **The Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act**

The Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act authorizes DHS, DOJ, and FBI offices that are responsible for monitoring, analyzing, investigating, and prosecuting domestic terrorism. The legislation requires these offices to issue joint annual reports that assess the domestic terrorism threat posed by white supremacists and neo-Nazis; analyze domestic terrorism incidents that occurred in the previous six months; and provide transparency through a public quantitative analysis of domestic terrorism-related assessments, investigations, incidents, arrests, indictments, prosecutions, convictions, and weapons recoveries. The DHS, DOJ, and FBI offices would be required to focus their limited resources on the most significant domestic terrorism threats, as determined by the joint report.

The legislation would also codify the Domestic Terrorism Executive Committee (DTEC), an interagency task force which was originally created by DOJ in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. Additionally, the bill would require DHS, DOJ, and the FBI to ensure anti-terrorism training and resource programs for Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement include understanding, detecting, deterring, and investigating acts of domestic terrorism. The legislation would establish an interagency task force to combat white supremacist and neo-Nazi infiltration of the uniformed services. Finally, the legislation clarifies the support that DOJ can provide to communities impacted by domestic terrorism and requires the FBI to assign a special agent or hate crimes liaison to each field office to investigate hate crimes incidents with a nexus to domestic terrorism.