

D.C. CRIME FLOOR SPEECH
U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.)
Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Mr. President, I rise to express my support for the Resolution of Disapproval on the new soft-on-crime law approved by the District of Columbia city council. The resolution represents our chance to say, “Enough is enough.”

Today, Americans feel increasingly unsafe. It’s not hard to understand why, since it has become impossible to disregard or dismiss the unraveling of law and order across the country over the past few years.

Whether it’s the lack of law enforcement on the border, anti-police rhetoric, or weakened punishments for violent crimes, Americans know that the shift away from law and order, right and wrong is tearing at the fabric of their communities.

Crime is at a 25-year high across the entire country. Unfortunately, my home state of Mississippi is not immune from this trend. Our capital, Jackson, has recorded more than 100 homicides for three consecutive years.

It’s the same song, different verse, in our nation’s very own capital, where overall crime is up 25% since last year. In fact, Washington, D.C.’s murder rate is 34% higher today than this time last year. Auto thefts are up 110% in this city.

What has the response been from the Democratic leadership? Well, it certainly has not made public safety a priority.

There is a good reason the Senate is considering a Resolution of Disapproval against the D.C. Council’s Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022.

With D.C.’s growing record of lawlessness, the city council voted to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences and reduce penalties for crimes like robbery, carjacking, home invasion, burglary, and more. These are violent crimes that leave victims traumatized, injured, or worse—dead.

So why is the instinct to protect the criminal—to signal that the penalties for violating the law are being eased?

This law will put residents, constituents, tourists, federal workers, and elected officials directly in harm’s way.

Rather than holding them accountable for their own actions, the D.C. Council would prefer to let these violent criminals go back to the same streets and commit the same violent crimes.

Is it any wonder Washington D.C. has a police recruitment and retention problem?

At the same time, those responsible for enforcing our justice system seem more interested in carrying out “justice” based on politics.

The Biden administration’s Justice Department, for example, appears to be laser focused on parents at local school board meetings, pro-life Americans exercising their right to protest, or spying on Catholic Americans—while taking a “nothing to see here” approach to threats of violence against sitting justices of the Supreme Court or attacks on pregnancy centers.

If things continue this way, Americans will start to wonder if their safety and protection is determined by their political affiliation.

Mr. President, public safety should not be a political issue.

It is not “virtue signaling” to lessen punishments for violent criminals. It is just dangerous.

It’s not “progressive” to pretend the breakdown in border security and subsequent flood of fentanyl aren’t contributing to surges in crime and death. It is nonsense.

Americans, who live in the greatest nation in the world, at the very least deserve to feel safe. We deserve to live in a country of law and order.

Yes, it is time to say “enough is enough” to the radical policies embraced by the Democratic party that have only resulted in more crime, more fear, and more tragedies.

I yield the floor.