

**The House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Federal
Government Surveillance Hearing
“Victims of Violent Crime: The Human Cost of Failed Policies”
September 29, 2025**

Key Testimonies and Viral Reach

Three witnesses delivered compelling accounts:

- Mia Alderman, grandmother of 9-year-old Mary Santina Collins, murdered in 2019 by a juvenile offender previously released despite violent priors. Alderman described the “outrageous” escalation in Charlotte’s crime, stating she no longer feels safe after decades in the city.
- Steve Federico, father of 22-year-old Logan Federico, killed in 2023 during a home invasion by a career criminal with over 30 arrests. He criticized systemic failures that allowed the perpetrator’s repeated releases.
- A representative for the Zarutskas family, emphasized the light rail stabbing as emblematic of unchecked recidivism.

These narratives, broadcast live and shared extensively on social media platforms, amassed millions of views within days. Clips of Alderman’s testimony alone garnered over 6,800 likes and 1,800 reposts on X (formerly Twitter), amplifying calls for accountability and reform. The viral dissemination extended to national outlets, framing the hearing as a stark indictment of progressive criminal justice approaches in Democrat-led jurisdictions.

Broader Sociopolitical Impact

The hearing catalyzed several significant outcomes including:

- Heightened Public and Media Awareness: It spotlighted Charlotte’s crime challenges, with reports documenting 15 additional homicides in the city since Zarutskas’s death, alongside surges in shootings (25 incidents) and stabbings in the ensuing weeks. This prompted widespread coverage in outlets like the Associated Press and local affiliates, shifting national discourse toward victim-centered policies.

- **Law Enforcement Mobilization:** On October 3, 2025, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) formally requested federal law enforcement and National Guard deployment, citing overwhelmed resources and a crime rate exceeding 97% of U.S. cities (46 incidents per 1,000 residents). Republican lawmakers, including Rep. Pat Harrigan (R-NC), endorsed the appeal, referencing successful Guard interventions in Washington, D.C., which reduced violent crime by 22% in 30 days.
- **Policy and Legislative Momentum:** The event fueled Republican advocacy for federal reforms, including stricter bail standards and enhanced pretrial detention. It influenced subcommittee discussions on bills like the Kayla Hamilton Act (H.R. 4371), aimed at curbing crimes by undocumented immigrants, and broader oversight of urban safety funding. Proponents argue it pressured local officials, including Mayor Vi Lyles, to reassess strategies amid community outcry.
- **Community and Political Repercussions:** While protesters outside the venue accused Republicans of politicizing tragedy for partisan gain—particularly around racial disparities in crime narratives—the hearing galvanized victims’ advocates and conservative groups. It also boosted fundraising and voter engagement for GOP candidates in Mecklenburg County, with endorsements from local groups emphasizing safety as a 2026 midterm priority.

In summary, the hearing transcended its procedural scope, serving as a pivotal platform that humanized policy failures, mobilized institutional responses, and intensified bipartisan scrutiny of criminal justice efficacy. Its enduring effects continue to shape debates on recidivism and urban governance, with ongoing data showing mixed crime trends in Charlotte (e.g., a 24% homicide drop year-over-year but localized spikes).