

How law enforcement works together when it matters most



Lawyers' Forum

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The morning began in a West Side parking lot where I met members of the [FBI](#), [U.S. Treasury](#), [Homeland Security](#), [Illinois State Police](#) and [Chicago Police Department](#).

They served as my protective detail and motorcade for the day, assigned to ensure my safety as we traveled by armored SUV and helicopter.

I'm not an elected official, foreign dignitary or cooperating witness. But on this day, I volunteered to play all three roles.

It was just a drill.

But it offered a glimpse into something we rarely see: how law enforcement actually coordinates when the stakes are highest. The officers seamlessly worked together with no jurisdictional squabbling and no turf wars — just professionals who clearly trusted each other's expertise.

We started in the motorcade with a lead car navigating and blocking traffic to keep us in motion. If someone is going to be a target, movement is key.

We reached the helicopter, and the motorcade departed after takeoff to meet again at Midway Airport. We landed after the protective perimeter was established. I joined the motorcade again as we drove to a government building where the exercise intensified.

As I walked from the SUV to the building, an actor pretending to be a threat to my safety approached. Within seconds, 20 sets of trained eyes spotted him. The response was swift, professional and measured with no unnecessary force, no panic — just competent people doing their jobs.

We then proceeded north on Clark Street to Wrigley Field and reached the front of the marquee by the first pitch. Walking into a crowd of 30,000-plus people surrounded by a 30-person security detail is surreal for anyone, particularly for a lawyer more accustomed to depositions than death threats.

As we moved through the concourse, I grasped the mathematics of protection in space and time: thousands of sight lines, countless potential threats and endless variables.

What I witnessed throughout the day wasn't just tactical proficiency but something more fundamental: genuine coordination to prepare for scenarios all too real for the people these officers actually protect. City police, state troopers and federal agents can operate as a single unit.

This matters now more than ever. Political violence has moved from fringe fantasy to grim reality. When we passively allow social media to stoke anger and divisiveness, it metastasizes into threats against public figures. Law enforcement is the thin line between democracy and chaos.

These officers, regardless of which agency signs their paychecks, share a common mission that transcends politics. They are obligated to protect Republicans, Democrats, judges, witnesses, foreign dignitaries and ordinary citizens — without partisanship.

Yet we're asking them to operate in an environment where cooperation itself has become politicized. Meanwhile, the threats they face grow more complex.

What I saw during my day as a pretend VIP is the antidote to this dysfunction: professionals who understand that public safety requires setting aside differences to focus on the mission. The FBI agent and the Chicago cop in my detail didn't debate politics — they watched each other's backs and mine.

Every day, these same principles of coordination and professionalism keep our communities safer. I experienced the simulation. The officers live this necessary and never-ending cycle.

Regardless of our political differences, we should agree that the men and women who dedicate their careers to protecting others deserve our support. If a personal-injury lawyer can figure that out during one day of playing pretend, maybe the rest of us can too.

Because when people buy into the notion that their political opposition represents the worst of human nature, the result is the worst of human nature.

Practice Areas: [Criminal Law](#)

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