

# Military, Law Enforcement News, and More...

## Crime Commission president Bill Gibbons lays out four-step plan to reduce and prevent crime

MEMPHIS, TN - Speaking to the Frayser Exchange Club, Crime Commission president Bill Gibbons focused on known best practices that work in preventing and reducing crime if (1) implemented correctly, (2) brought to scale, and (3) sustained over time. In his comments, Gibbons gave four examples:

**1. Violence intervention.** Much of our violent crime – especially aggravated assault – is retaliatory in nature, and correctly implemented violence intervention efforts work. The City of Memphis has invested substantial funding

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to implement such an effort, primarily through the 901 BLOC Squad. Efforts have been scaled up, with some 75 intervenors (some full-time and some part-time) now participating. Over the past year, the 901 BLOC Squad



At the Frayser Exchange Club, Crime Commission president Bill Gibbons lays out plans to reduce crime. (Photo/Courtesy: Crime Commission)

has intervened with over 2,800 individuals. It will be up to the next mayor and City Council whether to sustain this effort.

**2. Focused deterrence.** This best practice involves focusing on known bad actors and delivering a dual message that there

*Smart deployment of law enforcement resources to make sure they are in the right places at the right times works. The University of Memphis Public Safety Institute has conducted four assessments of data-driven policing in the community, all of which show positive results in the short run.*

are individuals and groups willing to help them move in the right direction and change their behavior but that they will be held accountable if they decide to continue down the path of criminal conduct. The City of Memphis has taken the lead on implementing this effort as well, working with the TN Department of Correction and various service providers. Will the next mayor decide to scale it up and sustain it?

**3. Data-driven policing.** Smart deployment of law enforcement resources to make sure they are in the right places at the right times works.

The University of Memphis Public Safety Institute has conducted four assessments of data-

driven policing in the community, all of which show positive results in the short run. Because of limited resources, though, the results are not necessarily lasting when those resources are moved to other “hotspots.” The only way to scale data-driven policing up is through more resources, including more officers.

**4. Violence intervention services for those on community supervision.** For those under a form of court-imposed community supervision – both adults and juveniles – hands-on intervention services can work to avoid re-offending. The Memphis Police Department and the Shelby County Sheriff’s Office have jointly received \$6 million in state funds to begin such a hands-on approach for high-risk juveniles. Memphis Allies/Youth Villages will take the lead in providing such services. How will it be implemented? Will it be brought to scale? And will it be sustained over time? We don’t know the answers yet.

All four of the best practices noted by Gibbons are included in the local Safe Community Action Plan.



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## The Afghanistan withdrawal was a disaster and this is why accountability and transparency are necessary



By U.S. Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)

“A knife in the heart.” That is how Christy Shamblin, the mother-in-law of Marine Sgt. Nicole Gee, described what it felt like hearing the Biden admin-

### Opinion

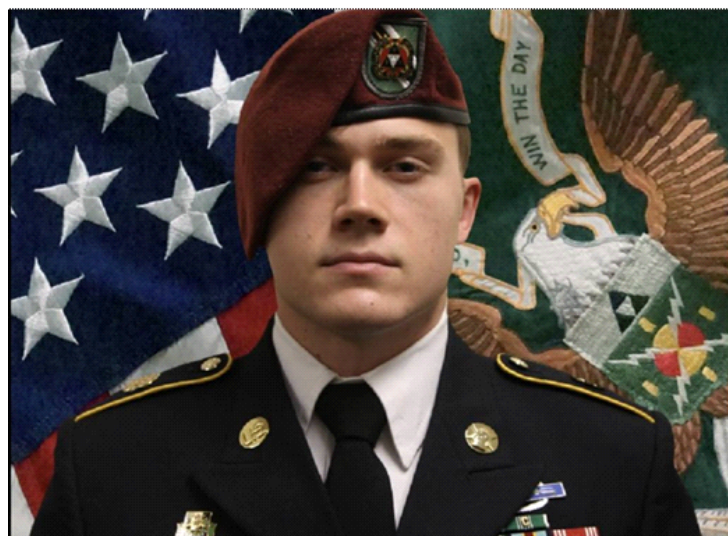
istration call the Afghanistan evacuation a “success.” Gee was one of the 13 U.S. servicemembers killed in a suicide bombing by ISIS-K terrorists at the Hamid Karzai International Airport on August 26, 2021. The same bomb that took Nicole from her family also killed Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Knauss, a Tennessean who volunteered for the dangerous mission at the airport to defend those trying to flee Afghanistan. He was only twenty-three years old. The families of

Staff Sgt. Knauss and the twelve other servicemembers who died that day are still grieving for loved ones who should never have been put in such a perilous situation.

Two years have passed since those last terrible days in Afghanistan, and the consequences continue to reverberate around the world. And yet, not one Biden official has been held accountable for this infamous failure. Not one.

The Biden administration decided they wanted all U.S. troops out of Afghanistan by the 20th anniversary of 9/11. This was a purely political decision that ignored both the situation on the ground and advances in intra-Afghan peace talks. As predicted, when the U.S. hastily evacuated our troops from the country, chaos ensued and the Taliban captured Kabul in just 10 days.

The consequences were grave. Afghan women have been relegated to the Dark Ages and live in abject servitude. Girls are banned from going to school after the sixth grade, it is extremely difficult for women to get jobs, and beauty salons have been prohibited, denying Afghan women their femininity. The Taliban commits flagrant human rights abuses, including public



Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Knauss was one of the 13 soldiers who lost his life in Joe Biden’s Afghanistan fiasco.

executions, stonings, and whippings.

As of March 2023, Secretary of State Antony Blinken estimated there were “about 175” Americans still left in Afghanistan, some of whom are being detained by the Taliban. Where are the efforts to rescue them? Biden also left behind tens of thousands of people who worked with the U.S. government, many of whom are now in hiding. This immense betrayal sent a clear message to those who may have otherwise partnered with the U.S. military in the future – the United States will not have your back.

The Biden administration’s botched withdrawal also created

a grave national security threat. The military was forced to abandon \$7.2 billion worth of equipment and the Taliban has taken full advantage, selling U.S.-made automatic assault rifles, rockets, night vision equipment and other supplies to terrorists around the world. Meanwhile, the New Axis of Evil is filling the vacuum Biden created. Chinese companies are exploiting the country’s vast mineral reserves worth an estimated \$1 trillion, and Chinese nationals have been caught trying to fly out of Bagram Air Base to Communist China with precious lithium. Beijing already controls more than 70 percent of the world’s extraction capability

of rare earth minerals and almost 90 percent of the world’s processing capacity. The Chinese Communist Party is seeking to increase its control over these essential elements which will only increase Beijing’s military capabilities. We need accountability for the Afghanistan withdrawal, and we must ensure nothing like this ever occurs again. It was a debacle of epic proportions, and accountability must fall on the shoulders of Biden and his advisors. It’s no wonder the military is facing a recruiting crisis! The families of Nicole Gee, Ryan Knauss, and the more than 2,000 other U.S. servicemembers we lost in Afghanistan want the truth, and that is the least they should be given.



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