

Testimony on FY 21 Special Appropriation

By Lisa Titus, Deputy Sheriff, Montgomery County, Shop Steward, UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO

Hello, my name is Lisa Titus and I am a Montgomery County deputy sheriff and a shop steward with UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, my workload and the workload of my coworkers has just skyrocketed. I'd say it's two to three times more work than before the pandemic.

We have been out on the streets, dealing with the public this whole time. We didn't have the luxury of staying put and remaining socially distant while this pandemic rages. There's has been too much going on.

Personally, I've had to take people who are in crisis to the hospital, where I know covid could be a serious issue. Many of the people we're dealing with are in mental health crisis, and they don't grasp the concept or the need for PPE. That layer of protection that so many are using to keep themselves safe is stripped away from us.

My coworkers and I must serve warrants, provide court security, and also work in and out of the jail, transporting inmates to doctors' visits or other appointments. We provide child support enforcement services. We help with domestic violence interventions.

The biggest problems since this pandemic hit have been related to mental health. Everyone's issues just seem heightened. And there are folks who are trying to get around the law. We used to be charged with aiding in evictions, but with evictions on hold, there are landlords who try to find other ways to get people out. It's tough.

Our jobs were dangerous before the pandemic, but now the intensity levels have gone through the roof, adding a lot of danger to our jobs. I urge you to approve our general wage adjustment and other increases.