

# Sen. Durbin Questions Kristen Clarke On Police Reform

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today questioned Kristen Clarke, President Biden’s nominee to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, during her nomination hearing. Durbin asked Clarke to discuss her views on police reform, racial justice in America, and how to improve law enforcement training and social services.

“We do need more social workers. They are a necessary part of law enforcement as far as I’m concerned and we can avoid a lot of deadly confrontations. Yes, we need more social support in schools, that goes without saying...more money in mental health aid as well. And I question, as others do, sending all this military equipment to police departments. I want to give you a chance to...explain your position in your own words,” Durbin said.

Clarke answered by stating throughout her career she has worked with law enforcement, starting at the Department of Justice and working closely with the FBI. She also said she has endeavored to form partnerships with law enforcement to develop more effective strategies to combat hate crimes. Lastly, Clarke said she does not support defunding the police but does support funding strategies to make sure law enforcement can carry out their jobs more safely, like channeling more resources to emotional health treatment.

Durbin then asked Clarke how she thinks we can improve policing in America.

**“Do you think our police need to invest more money in training and in screening recruits to make certain that those who are not ready for the job, or prepared for it, or bring some prejudice to it, are excluded? Durbin said.**

Clarke said that she supports President Biden’s commitment of \$300 million to police officers to ensure they have more resources to do their jobs.

Clarke’s nomination to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division is supported by the Major Cities Chiefs Association and National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, among other groups, and by individual sheriffs and police chiefs, local prosecutors, state Attorneys General, and bipartisan former Justice Department officials.