



Durbin Delivers Opening Statement At Criminal Justice Subcommittee Hearing

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today delivered an opening statement during the “Behavioral Health and Policing: Interactions and Solutions” Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice and Counterterrorism hearing. U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ), Chair of the Subcommittee, made history as the first African American Chair of a Senate Judiciary subcommittee. During his opening statement, Durbin highlighted the importance of addressing childhood trauma and promoting trauma-informed care in the criminal justice system.

Key quotes:

“In this room today, we are making history as you take the gavel as the first African American Chair of a Senate Judiciary subcommittee. This is not only an historic moment, it’s long overdue. I couldn’t think of a better person to chair this subcommittee.”

“I made a trip a few years ago...to the Cook County Juvenile Facility, which houses adolescents under the age of 18 who have been accused of gun crimes...There is a high school in this facility...and I sat down with the teachers and counselors at this facility and asked, ‘Who are these kids? How did they get into this situation?’ They said to me there is one overwhelming common theme: over 90 percent of these kids have been the victim of trauma.”

“Let us not forget the need for mental health counseling for children. Intervention in the lives of children. I don’t think these kids are lost forever. They need help. They need a mentor. They need someone who believes in them and who cares and can turn them onto the right path instead of seeing them end up on the wrong path.”