

CNN's *The Situation Room*

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3 minutes and 2 seconds

PAMELA BROWN: Brian, we're already getting reaction from D.C. Council members.

BRIAN TODD: We are Pamela and Wolf. This coming into CNN from Council Member Charles Allen of the Sixth Ward in D.C. His post is: "The president taking over local control of MPD and putting the U.S. military onto the streets of D.C. under the guise of public safety, is wrong. It's an extreme, outrageous, and dangerous move for our city and the safety of all of our residents." He is the first city council member to react to this whole thing. None of them had reacted really last week to this in any real measure. This is the first time a city council member has reacted and come out strongly on this. We're also reaching out to Mayor Muriel Bowser's office and the office of the Metropolitan Washington Police Department for their response. We started to reach out to them while this news conference was going on. No word back from them yet. The mayor has been fairly muted in her comments on this. She did speak out yesterday in an interview, but did not openly criticize the President for this. It's an extraordinary move. We have to point out. Never before in American history has the U.S. President taken over control of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Police Department. How is this going to work on the streets? How is it going to work from a command and control standpoint? That is a huge, huge question. And, of course, his — his threat to do this in other cities. We'll see how that plays out. I think you got to see how it really plays out here first.

BROWN: Right and we should also note that he talked about moving the homeless population in D.C. —

TODD: Right.

BROWN: — thousands of people —

TODD: Yeah.

BROWN: — far away without offering those specifics.

WOLF BLITZER: He didn't say where they were going. I want to bring in our senior White House reporter, Kevin Liptak. Kevin, you've been monitoring this very, very closely. What jumps out at you?

KEVIN LIPTAK: Yeah. And I think the President's steps here to federalize the D.C. police force certainly very significant. What we didn't hear from the President was how long that would last. You know, the statute that he's using — the D.C. Home Rule Act — allows for initial federalization for 48 hours before notifying Congress, he said that he was doing that. So beyond that, we don't know exactly how long it would last. The other thing that stuck out was the President raising open the possibility that he would use active duty troops as part of this effort,

saying that they would be ready as needed to join the federal — or National Guard to help support law enforcement in the city and you really did hear the President paint quite a dystopian picture of Washington, D.C., saying that it was overtaken by violent gangs, by bloodthirsty criminals, using this imagery that doesn't necessarily comport with a lot of people's experience in this city, but also with what the actual numbers show. You know, statistics do show that violent crime in Washington is falling since reaching a peak in 2023. The President's aides dispute some of those figures. You heard the President come out saying that some of those statistics might have been cooked. But really, when you look at the numbers, what the President is painting is an image that doesn't necessarily match up with what the figures show, but also with what a lot of people's experience in the city is. And so, a significant step by the President certainly today.