

## Security and Safety

### Code Red

Recollections of the Capitol Police response to the attacks on September 11th.

*Arva Marie Johnson, Capitol Police Officer, U.S. Capitol Police*

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That was another heartbreaker there, to know that at first thought, you know, they just thought maybe a plane just went into the Towers. And then as we were watching the news, and we were working in the subway, and then they said another plane had hit. And then my partner and I, we said, "No, that's not an accident. Something else is going on." And then that was when they came over the radio and told us to start evacuating the building because a plane had gone into the Pentagon. So my partner and I, we said, "We got to be next, then." But we had to make sure we got everybody out and cleared everything, and they said everything—you know everybody—was out the building. So we just stayed and waited until our officials told us what we could do. And we just stayed to protect the building; we made sure, you know, the Members and everybody had gotten out. That was one of those things that they call a code red—that I had never heard since I had been on the department. As a code red means that it, whatever it is, it's going to take everybody out at that point. But I think, was that the one? I think that was the plane that was in Pennsylvania that kept the one from coming to the Capitol. And I prayed for all of those people, bless their hearts. They helped us a lot. And they are heroes.