

I am humbled by the honor, and I'm no exception to the rule. We have many fine officers that are far greater and have done better things than I have. I do appreciate the community support, and I know sometimes it's hard for officers to see whether or not the city supports us, but I've always said that by and large, the city does support its police officers and we're never going to have the support of the criminals and the anarchists, and to tell you the truth, they don't have my support either. However, I do support their constitutional rights and their free exercise of them. I've seen the hand of the Lord in my situation. Can you believe I was shot five times to the legs and I walked into this room? It's almost healed up, but right here over my heart where I wear my vest certainly saved my life there. I appreciate the support of the community and the Fairbanks Police Department, and the Anchorage Police Department, and the Alaska State Troopers and other officers. In fact, my kids have been, they really feel like this has been a great time because my best friend Phil McBroom out at North Pole Police Department, he's been watching my four kids with his four kids. Bless his wife's heart. They're watching eight kids. And the officers from the Anchorage Police Department and locally here have been providing them meals, and they really appreciate it, but our officers do a very hard job, and they need your support. Unfortunately, when an officer gets shots or something bad happens, it's just human nature. We don't think about things that we need until something bad happens. I don't blame anyone for that but think about our officers. I've worked for the city for 12 years. Probably 10 of those years I work weekends when my friends are off. I work at night and sleep during the day, don't sleep with my wife and the other officers, too. I was never called a racist until I put the uniform on. Once you put a police uniform on, you're racist. I can't ever let my guard down, not on Fred Myer and out of my house. I travel everywhere armed, always vigilant, always watching, and the other officers over there, they're the same way. So we need your support, not just when bad things happen, but the officers over there do a hard job and most of the time it's thankless, and we really appreciated the outpouring of support that's come from this, and I think Sergeant Barnett's here. I want to thank him, Officer Phil McBroom and Sergeant Barnett. Sergeant Barnett was the first one on scene and until he got that tourniquet on my leg, I didn't think I was going to survive, because I was bleeding a lot. But let me leave you with this last story. The night that I was shot, I had my four kids and my wife on my bed, and I read them a story like I do and after the story I told them, "I think I'm going to get shot tonight," and I'm in the middle of a gun battle, that's all I could think about and the first two people to call her to tell her, she hung up on because she thought I was playing a practical joke on her, and she thought it was a cruel joke. I wouldn't have done that to her, but can you imagine telling your kids before you go to work that you're going to get shot? Well, that's what our police officers deal with every day, and I'm not complaining, but I just want you to know what it's like in the life of a police officer, but we appreciate your support.