Security and Safety

September 12th

Personal recollections of the day after the attacks.

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I think really there was a state of shock, you know throughout the country certainly, but in this area where all of these locations are in close proximity of your everyday life, it's very trying. I know there was a lot of anxiety. I mean we had some of the junior staff that were afraid to come back to work, and our chief of staff certainly wasn't going to make them. You know these are young, you know students and some interns that you know, this is their first experience in the workforce, and you know that's a pretty sobering introduction to government and to the workforce. So we had some, some, you know, junior staff that, you know, our chief of staff had said you know, you don't need to come back in just yet, and I remember you know just in terms of the feedback you know, the phone lines we had turned on when we left the offices, in case anybody called, and I seem to recall there was one recording from a constituent, it was a man, sounded, you know, like an older gentleman who had called, and he lived in the Pentagon City area, or Crystal City area, and he was registering a complaint about a low-flying plane that was flying near his building, and it was just a powerful sign that you know, moments later, it was apparent what was really going on, but at the time, you know people were going about their daily lives, and so we kind of got a smattering of different, you know, feedback from people, and really we were in reaction mode. Arlington County, Alexandria, Fairfax County emergency response teams were all heavily involved. In fact, Arlington County was the first to arrive at the Pentagon when, you know, it was hit. So we had a lot of rapid response within the emergency response communities in the Congressman's district, and we were really trying to help them and facilitate whatever needs they had.