Hearst Texas Code Test

Instructions:
We ask that all data reporter candidates complete a code test so we can see how you think with data – your set up, approach, toolkit and creative problem solving. You should spend no more than 3 hours on this test. **Don't worry, we know that's not nearly enough time to plan, run and check a full data analysis and craft beautiful data viz.** Just get through as much as you can. We'll spend the additional planned 30 minutes talking about what you did and your ideas on what's still to be done.

You can reach me at (412)-580-2587 for any pressing questions or concerns during the test. Some answers to common questions below:

- **Please use Python or R** to complete this test.
- **Yes, you are allowed to use AI** to assist in your code. Our rule of thumb: you should never use AI to write any code you don't understand. You should never use AI to think in your stead. You should be transparent about which AI tools you used and how.
- **Don't worry about sending us the code right away.** We will give you time after the 30-minute chat to push it to GitHub or send it to us via email.

Prompt:
In Fall 2025, Trump seized control of Washington, D.C.'s police department and deployed hundreds of National Guard troops and other federal agents to the nation's capital, citing a crime emergency. He has used crime to justify the federal government's intervention. He's also sent the Guard into Memphis and said he planned to eventually carry out similar operations in New Orleans, Chicago and Baltimore.

You have 3 hours before a meeting with your editor where they've asked you to use FBI crime data to craft a data-driven story around this topic. Do some preliminary analysis work to prepare for the meeting and craft/answer initial questions about how you would tackle the problem and how long the data work might take for a potential story.

Please use code to complete this task. If there are necessary manual steps you take, document what they are within your notebook or in a README.

Deliverables:

- A list of questions you want to ask of the data.
- Some preliminary exploratory code. It's ok if you don't get to all your questions but be prepared to explain your choices and what the code does.

Be prepared to talk about:

(This doesn't have to be all written down or executed. Just be prepared to talk to us about it in a structured way)

- A fleshed-out plan for how you are going to explore, analyze and visualize the data.
- A list of outstanding questions or concerns you have about the data, the analysis or the topic in general.
- Additional research you would do and sources you would talk to for this piece.