

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 19, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Attorney General Bondi and Director Patel:

It appears your unprecedented political purge of career Department of Justice (DOJ) employees is continuing at a rapid pace. Multiple public reports, including a statement from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Agents Association (FBIAA), suggest that DOJ and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have disregarded the law and fired even more FBI agents out of political spite over the past weeks. As the Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) and the Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which oversee and direct funding for both the DOJ and the FBI, we are writing to express our continued objections to such unprecedented and blatantly political actions. Your actions are having a direct and detrimental effect on FBI's ability to maintain its national security mission. We urge you to stop the purges—our nation's security is too important to be sacrificed for political games.

Notably, earlier this month, the FBIAA said in a statement that “Director Patel has disregarded the law and launched a campaign of erratic and arbitrary retribution. FBI Agents deal in facts, and we urge Director Patel to do the same.”

Assuming the reporting is true, the facts here are as staggering as they are inexplicable. In the last week of October, at least two FBI agents were fired who had worked on Special Counsel Jack Smith's “Arctic Frost” investigation, which was initiated to investigate efforts to overturn the 2020 Presidential election results. The purge continued when at least four additional FBI agents who had worked on Smith's team or had worked on cases related to the January 6, 2021, attack on the United States Capitol were fired. However, those agents were reinstated the same day, apparently after U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro intervened. Reporting suggests that on the following day, the agents were—again—abruptly fired.

The FBI, as our nation's top investigative agency, played a critical role in investigations related to both 2020 election interference and the January 6 attack. For example, many of the Bureau's 38,000 dedicated staff—with no personal agendas—were assigned to investigate the assaults on U.S. Capitol Police officers and District of Columbia law enforcement in accordance with the law and FBI policy. Agents and support staff around the country dedicated time and resources to these investigations, which as of November 2024 had yielded 1,561 defendants federally charged with crimes associated with the attack on the U.S. Capitol. This is a prime example of how our system of law and order should still be working.

We will continue to remind you that the FBI and its workforce are critical to our nation's security. The FBI's rank-and-file agents, intelligence analysts, and support staff help keep our country safe. As the FBIAA put it, "[a]n agent simply being assigned to an investigation and conducting it appropriately within the law should never be grounds for termination." We wholeheartedly agree with the FBIAA's position.

These actions appear to flout long-standing procedures to protect FBI employees. These protections were put in place to guard against the very conduct that DOJ and FBI leadership is employing. At best, it is unclear whether these procedural protections were followed; at worst, they were flagrantly ignored.

We will—again—reiterate to you our demand that you halt efforts to target the dedicated public servants in the FBI, and DOJ writ large, to fulfill President Trump's partisan political revenge agenda. All indications suggest these are illegal actions, which will undoubtedly have severe consequences for DOJ and FBI when these terminated employees join their other former colleagues in lawsuits against the agencies you are entrusted with protecting.

In addition, we request that DOJ and FBI provide the Senate CJS Subcommittee and the Senate Judiciary Committee the following information along with a follow-up briefing: 1) A full accounting on the scope of the FBI firings that occurred between October 27 and November 4, 2025; 2) The authority under which DOJ/FBI acted to terminate those employees; and 3) The precedent that exists for DOJ/FBI to terminate employees related solely to their case assignments.

As Ranking Member of the Senate CJS Appropriations Subcommittee and Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, we will continue to work to ensure the Department is following the letter of the law and the will of Congress. Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to receiving your response no later than December 3, 2025.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Senate
Committee on the Judiciary