

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2025

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Deputy Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Deputy Attorney General Blanche:

We write to you with alarm regarding the Office of the Deputy Attorney General's decision to send armed Special Deputy U.S. Marshals to the home of former Pardon Attorney Elizabeth Oyer late Friday, April 4, 2025, to deliver a letter warning Ms. Oyer against appearing before Members of Congress on Monday, April 7, 2025. This thuggish act is an escalation of this Administration's attacks on career officials across the Department of Justice, as well as a blatant attempt to engage in intimidation tactics to silence former employees. Sending armed officers to Ms. Oyer's residence is a clear abuse of the Department of Justice's authority and resources, which exist to serve and protect the public, not intimidate congressional witnesses.

As you well know, on March 7, 2025, the Department of Justice terminated Ms. Oyer from her position as Pardon Attorney, a nonpolitical, career position, in a three-sentence memo signed by you.¹ The Democratic members of the Senate Judiciary Committee sent Attorney General Pam Bondi a March 26, 2025, letter asking several questions about the decision to terminate Ms. Oyer, but have not received a response.² As detailed in that correspondence, Ms. Oyer was terminated hours after she refused to recommend restoring gun rights to actor Mel Gibson after he lost such rights due to a domestic violence conviction.

Members of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees, seeking to conduct oversight and inform the public of issues relating to President Donald Trump's attack on the rule of law, weaponization of the Department of Justice, and intimidation of federal employees and corporations, invited Ms. Oyer to speak to Members and the public at a spotlight hearing on April 7, 2025. According to Ms. Oyer, she learned on the evening of April 4 that the Office of the Deputy Attorney General (ODAG) had directed the Department of Justice's Security and Emergency Planning Staff to have two armed Special Deputy U.S. Marshals personally serve Ms. Oyer at her home between 9pm and 10pm with a letter from Ms. Kendra Wharton of your Office,³ warning Ms. Oyer about alleged risks of appearing before Members of Congress.⁴ While the armed officers were on their way to Ms. Oyer's personal residence, she was able to confirm receipt of the letter, precluding the hand delivery of the letter by the Deputy U.S. Marshals at her home, where her teenage child was alone. It appears that no member of your Office attempted to contact Ms. Oyer by telephone or via Ms. Oyer's primary email address before sending these Deputy U.S. Marshals.

¹ Elizabeth Oyer, *Trump's Lawyers Fired Me After I Refused to Let Mel Gibson Have Guns*, ROLLING STONE (March 14, 2025), <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/political-commentary/trump-justice-department-fired-mel-gibsonguns-1235296311/>.

² Letter from Senators Durbin, Whitehouse, Klobuchar, Coons, Blumenthal, Hirono, Booker, Padilla, Welch, and Schiff to Attorney General Bondi (March 26, 2025).

³ Letter from Kendra Wharton, Associate Deputy Attorney General to Elizabeth Oyer (April 4, 2025), *available at* https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/20250404-DOJ-Letter-to-E.-Oyer_04.04.25.pdf.

⁴ Letter from Michael R. Bromwich to the Hon. Todd Blanche (April 7, 2025), *available at* https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/20250407-Letter-to-Deputy-Attorney-General-Blanche-Oyer-2025-04-07-12_09_13.pdf.

The decision to dispatch armed U.S. Marshals to the home of a former Department official who has not engaged in any wrongdoing just days before she was scheduled to testify before Members of Congress appears highly unusual and seems calculated to intimidate Ms. Oyer and prevent her from testifying. To help us better understand this decision and the Department's policies for employing similar tactics, please provide answers to the following questions, no later than April 28, 2025:

1. Please provide the justification for directing Special Deputy U.S. Marshals to deliver a letter to Ms. Oyer at her personal residence.
2. Please provide the names and roles of individuals involved in the decision to direct Special Deputy U.S. Marshals to deliver the letter to Ms. Oyer at her personal residence.
3. Please provide all records reflecting or relating to communications between and among you, Attorney General Pam Bondi, Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General (PADAG) Emil Bove, Associate Deputy Attorney General Kendra Wharton, any other Office of the Attorney General (OAG) or ODAG official, the Security and Emergency Planning Staff and any other staff in the Justice Management Division (JMD), and/or any White House official concerning the decision to direct Special Deputy U.S. Marshals to deliver the letter to Ms. Oyer at her personal residence.
4. Please provide all records reflecting or relating to communications between and among you, Attorney General Pam Bondi, PADAG Emil Bove, Associate Deputy Attorney General Kendra Wharton, any other OAG or ODAG official, the Security and Emergency Planning Staff and any other JMD staff, and/or any White House official concerning policies or procedures relating to direction of U.S. Marshals.
5. From January 20, 2025, through the present, please provide a summary of all instances in which you or anyone in your Office has directed Special Deputy U.S. Marshals to deliver a letter to a current or former federal employee.

As your Office advised in the April 4 letter directed to Ms. Oyer, "[t]o the extent Members of Congress have legitimate interests in" seeking information relevant to decisions by the Department, "their requests should be directed to the Department." Please consider this such a request from Members of Congress related to this troubling decision by the Department.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

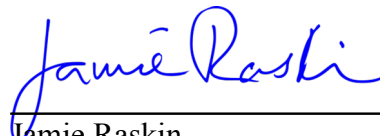
Sincerely,



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
House Committee on the
Judiciary