

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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February 6, 2025

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

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

Greetings. I look forward to meeting you.

I write now to call upon you to immediately halt the accelerating outrageous purge taking place of career officials throughout the Department of Justice (DOJ), including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and to immediately reinstate all of those prosecutors, agents, and law enforcement professionals who have been wrongfully terminated simply for doing their jobs in the investigation of violent crimes and other serious felonies, including those committed on January 6, 2021, against our police officers and our government.

Your actions to halt and reverse this lawlessness are compelled by law and consistent with your eloquent sworn testimony at your confirmation hearings that you will not participate in efforts to “politicize the DOJ.”<sup>1</sup>

Firing federal prosecutors and FBI agents *simply for doing their jobs* is, of course, a blatantly political violation of the civil service laws of the United States.

Professional civil servants—who are by design and by law not political employees—cannot be fired simply because they were assigned to investigate or prosecute certain crimes or because they did a good job at it. For you to allow any discipline, much less dismissal, against DOJ and FBI personnel for doing their jobs well, as assigned by their superiors, would demoralize the work force, jeopardize the hard-won independence and impartiality of the DOJ, and disgrace the Department and your nascent tenure there.

As you know, shortly after President Trump’s inauguration, Acting Attorney General James McHenry fired the entire team of career prosecutors who were assigned to work with Special Counsel Jack Smith. Mr. McHenry did not fire them based on poor performance or

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<sup>1</sup> *The Nomination of the Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi to be Attorney General of the United States: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on the Judiciary, 119th Cong. (2025)*, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/committee-activity/hearings/the-nomination-of-the-honorable-pamela-jo-bondi-to-be-attorney-general-of-the-united-states>.

professional misconduct. Amazingly, he fired them because they did the job they were assigned to do and did it well.<sup>2</sup>

For his part, the Interim U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, Ed Martin, likewise dismissed over a dozen career Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) for doing *their* jobs well. They prosecuted defendants who had violated federal law in the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, including extremists who violently assaulted law enforcement officers and stormed the certification of the results of the 2020 election in an effort to stop the peaceful transfer of power.<sup>3</sup>

The victims of these unprecedented purges are experienced and nonpartisan career prosecutors and investigators with exemplary work records who carefully followed “the facts and the law...without prejudice or improper influence” in accordance with the DOJ’s mission.<sup>4</sup> Yet, they have been dismissed and maligned by the DOJ. Why?

In fewer than three weeks, we have witnessed an onslaught against career nonpartisan attorneys, agents, and personnel, which badly undermines public safety and national security. Specialized attorneys and investigators from components throughout the Department—including the Criminal Division, the National Security Division, the Executive Office for Immigration Review, and the Public Integrity Section—have been summarily dismissed, demoted, and involuntarily reassigned to go practice in unfamiliar areas, divorced from their many years of legal expertise.<sup>5</sup> Many of these individuals have decades of experience, received multiple service awards, and have served under and been promoted by presidents of both major political parties, *including Donald Trump*.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Perry Stein, *DOJ Fires Officials Who Worked on Jack Smith’s Trump Investigations*, WASH. POST (Jan. 27, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/01/27/doj-firings-trump-jack-smith-officials/>

<sup>3</sup> Glenn Thrush, Devlin Barrett, Alan Feuer & Eileen Sullivan, *More Than a Dozen Prosecutors at Washington U.S. Attorney’s Office Are Dismissed*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 31, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/31/us/politics/prosecutors-us-attorneys-office-trump-firings.html>.

<sup>4</sup> About DOJ, U.S. DEP’T OF JUSTICE, <https://www.justice.gov/about> (last visited Feb. 3, 2025).

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Perry Stein & Ellen Nakashima, *Justice Dept. Removes Senior Career Officials from Key Positions*, WASH. POST (Jan. 21, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/01/21/justice-trump-removes-senior-staffers-national-security-criminal/>; Hannah Rabinowitz, Evan Perez and Kara Scannell, *Trump DOJ Shake-Up Sidelines Top Prosecutors in National Security, Adds New US Attorneys in DC and New York*, CNN (Jan. 21, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/01/21/politics/justice-department-shakeup/index.html>; Andrew Goudsward & Sarah N. Lynch, *Trump Administration Reassigns Close to 20 Justice Department Officials, Sources Say*, REUTERS (Jan. 23, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-administration-reassigns-close-20-justice-department-officials-sources-say-2025-01-22/>; Hamed Aleaziz, *Trump Administration Fires Immigration Court Officials as Crackdown Begins*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 20, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/20/us/politics/trump-administration-fires-immigration-judges.html>; Devlin Barrett and Adam Goldman, *Chief Corruption Prosecutor Resigns From Justice Dept.*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 27, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/27/us/politics/chief-corruption-prosecutor.html>.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Glenn Thrush, Devlin Barrett and Adam Goldman, *Justice Dept. Fires Prosecutors Who Worked on Trump Investigations*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 27, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/27/us/politics/justice-department-firings-trump-jack-smith.html>; Ben Penn, *Trump Said to Oust DOJ’s Veteran Diplomat, Civil Rights Head*, BLOOMBERG NEWS (Feb. 2, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/trump-said-to-oust-dojs-veteran-top-diplomat-civil-rights-head>; *Staff Profile: Former Deputy Assistant Attorney General & Counselor for*

The FBI has also suffered from this purge. The Acting Deputy Attorney General, and former Trump defense attorney, Emil Bove, has directed the Acting FBI Director to identify all agents assigned to investigate the January 6th attack in any capacity for a personnel review, potentially subjecting thousands of FBI employees to dismissal simply for following their orders.<sup>7</sup> This search comes on the heels of the FBI's Executive Assistant Directors—who lead the FBI's six branches, including the Intelligence, National Security, Cyber, and Criminal branches—being forced out of their jobs.<sup>8</sup> Reports indicate that Mr. Bove has also directed the termination of the Special Agents in Charge at four major FBI field offices, including Washington, D.C., as well as New Orleans, which will be hosting the Super Bowl this weekend.<sup>9</sup>

As you no doubt are aware, these career civil servants are subject to 150-year-old protections aimed at preventing lawless political agendas from shaping our federal workforce and dictating their work. Since Congress passed the Pendleton Act in 1883 and repeatedly strengthened it, including with the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, our country has had a merit-based federal civil service to make sure federal employees are selected “solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills,” and protected “against arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or coercion for partisan political purposes.”<sup>10</sup> This approach has kept the federal workforce from being turned into a presidential army of cronies and sycophants, ensuring that the laws of the people will be implemented by nonpartisan professionals selected for their qualifications and performance records. These principles are of surpassing importance especially at the DOJ, whose mission, which Thomas Jefferson described as the “most sacred of the duties of government,” is to “uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights.”<sup>11</sup>

Yet political appointees at the DOJ—including Mr. McHenry, Mr. Bove, and Mr. Martin—have smashed this bedrock principle of our civil service by firing dedicated and accomplished prosecutors, special agents, and law enforcement professionals. Together with President Trump's sweeping pardons, which were extended even to members of violent street gangs and militias who savagely attacked police officers on January 6th, these purges send the message that certain people are above the law for political reasons and that any prosecutor or law enforcement officer who dares hold them accountable, like other citizens, will be met with swift professional retribution.

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*International Affairs Bruce C. Swartz*, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, <https://www.justice.gov/archives/criminal/staff-profile/deputy-assistant-attorney-general-counselor-international-affairs-bruce-c> (last visited Feb. 3, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> Pat Milton, Robert Legare & Andres Triay, *FBI Executives Ousted and Personnel Under Internal Review as Trump DOJ Fires Jan. 6 Capitol Riot Prosecutors*, CBS NEWS (Jan. 31, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/fbi-agents-on-jan-6-capitol-riot-trump-investigations-to-be-fired-sources-say/>.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Biography of an Ideal, A History of the Federal Civil Service*, U.S. OFF. OF PERSONNEL MGMT. at 8 (Jan. 16, 2003), <https://dml.armywarcollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/OPM-Biography-of-an-Ideal-History-of-Civil-Service-2003.pdf>; *Pendleton Act (1883)*, NAT'L. ARCH. (last visited Jan. 24, 2025), <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/pendleton-act>.

<sup>11</sup> *Our Mission*, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, <https://www.justice.gov/about> (last visited Jan. 25, 2025); Thomas Jefferson, Note for Destutt de Tracy's Treatise on Political Economy (Apr. 6, 1816), <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-09-02-0433>.

During your hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee, you committed, under oath, to protecting DOJ personnel from political retribution. Specifically, you pledged that you would not “politicize” the DOJ, elaborating that there would “never be an enemies list within the Department of Justice,” that “no one” would be “prosecuted [or] investigated because they are a political opponent.”<sup>12</sup>

The professionals fired are not even “political opponents” of anyone. They are honest civil servants doing their jobs and upholding their oaths of office. They are Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, but above all Americans who don’t deserve to be treated like trash for doing their jobs well.

With as much passion as I can communicate to you through a letter, I am calling on you to immediately halt the politically motivated purge of career officials at the DOJ; reinstate all individuals who have been wrongfully terminated on the instructions of President Trump’s political appointees (including Mr. McHenry, Mr. Bove, and Mr. Martin); and commit, in writing, to ensuring that all future DOJ personnel actions will be guided solely by merit considerations related to job performance and professional conduct—not political motives and partisan vendettas—in strict compliance with federal law, the Constitution, and standard agency review processes. Please provide this information as soon as possible, but no later than 10:00 a.m., E.T., on February 10, 2025.

Again, I look forward to meeting you and stand ready to speak or to come pay you a visit if it would help you in your decision-making process.

Very truly yours,

  
Jamie Raskin  
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman

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<sup>12</sup> *The Nomination of the Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi to be Attorney General of the United States: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on the Judiciary, 119th Cong. (2025)*, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/committee-activity/hearings/the-nomination-of-the-honorable-pamela-jo-bondi-to-be-attorney-general-of-the-united-states>.