

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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March 12, 2026

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

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

Last month, House Judiciary Committee Democrats received a protected whistleblower disclosure from a former senior career official at the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Community Relations Service (CRS), the federal government's only agency dedicated to de-escalating community violence and preventing hate crimes. The disclosure, which is enclosed with this letter, provides a devastating insider account of how the Trump Administration's dismantling of CRS was utterly lawless. It further suggests that, at the time of this disclosure, DOJ had omitted material information from the Administrative Record it filed in ongoing litigation challenging the dismantling of the office. The disclosure raises serious concerns that DOJ may be once again attempting to mislead a federal court.¹

The whistleblower materials reveal that senior career leadership at CRS submitted multiple formal memoranda to DOJ leadership warning that the plan to reduce CRS from 57 employees to a single person was legally indefensible and operationally impossible under the Civil Rights Act, the Church Arson Prevention Act, and the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. These memoranda emphasized that CRS was classified by the government's own contingency plans as a "public safety" component, and so should have been exempt from the reduction-in-force under the Administration's executive order and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance. DOJ leadership ignored every single warning with no written justification.

The disclosure further reveals that DOJ initially excluded these critical memoranda in their entirety from the Administrative Record. Under the Administrative Procedure Act, the Administrative Record must contain the complete set of materials the agency considered, or should have considered, in reaching its decision. Here, however, DOJ appears to have selectively included other documents in the record while omitting the whistleblower's memoranda, and it misattributed a document to the whistleblower as a co-author despite the whistleblower's

¹ See Ryan Goodman et al., *The "Presumption of Regularity" in Trump Administration Litigation*, JUST SECURITY (Nov. 20, 2025), <https://www.justsecurity.org/120547/presumption-regularity-trump-administration-litigation/> (documenting Administration's misleading and false representations to federal courts).

contemporaneous objections that the document did not represent the whistleblower's views or CRS's position.

After catching this glaring omission, a federal judge required DOJ to disclose these memoranda as part of an ongoing lawsuit in federal court challenging CRS's dismantling, *Ethical Society of Police v. Bondi*. However, even after the court's order, DOJ applied overbroad redactions to the documents arguing that dismantling CRS was both dangerous and unlawful. The continuing manipulation of the litigation record apparently to cover up internal dissent raises serious questions about whether DOJ is continuing to mislead a federal court and the American public.

The disclosure also exposes a direct contradiction in DOJ's own representations. According to the whistleblower, OMB directed DOJ to eliminate CRS, instructing: "No funding is provided for CRS. The Department should eliminate the office and all associated functions not required by law." Yet in its court filings, DOJ has asserted that OMB played no role in the decision. Both cannot be true.

Finally, the disclosure confirms what we have long suspected: DOJ's purported "restoration" of CRS is a sham. The nine CRS employees called back to duty in February have not been permitted to perform any CRS work and have been reassigned to unrelated roles, and the one employee of CRS was transferred to EOUSA. The 22 additional employees DOJ claims to have "placed in CRS" came from entirely different offices, have no CRS training, and have been given no indication they will ever do CRS work. CRS exists today in name only.

The disclosure supports the significant concerns that 90 Members of Congress expressed in an amicus brief filed in the federal lawsuit *Ethical Society of Police v. Bondi*.² Our brief opposed DOJ leadership's lawless effort to eliminate the CRS and terminate its conflict resolution services to the NAACP, police organizations, faith communities, and hate crime victims nationwide. Based on the new information contained in this whistleblower disclosure, it now appears that DOJ's conduct was even more legally indefensible than the record before the court reflects.

CRS was built for exactly the kind of moment we are living through—before the Administration dismantled it, CRS had a full-time specialist in Minnesota and could have surged additional conciliators from across the Midwest within hours.³ Consistent with DOJ's existing Protocol for Responding to High-Profile Civil Rights Incidents (which the whistleblower flagged for DOJ leadership to follow), CRS could have been on the ground with impartial mediators as the crisis unfolded in Minneapolis and could have served as the confidential peacemakers Congress designed them to be. Instead, the Administration systematically and unlawfully

² Brief of Members of Congress as *Amici Curiae* in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction, *Ethical Society of Police v. Bondi*, Civ. No. 25-13115 (D. Mass. filed Dec. 5, 2025), https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/democrats-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/esop_v_bondi_house_member_brief.pdf.

³ Scott MacFarlane, *As Protests Build in Minneapolis and Portland, Justice Department has Scrapped its "Peacemakers" Office*, CBS NEWS (Jan. 11, 2026), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/justice-department-peacemakers-office-scrapped/>.

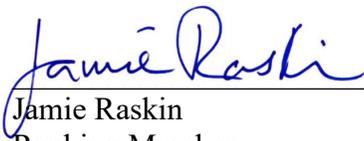
destroyed the agency known as “America’s Peacemaker.” This is an act of sabotage against the safety and civil rights of the American people, carried out in total defiance of Congress and concealed from the courts.

Accordingly, pursuant to the House Judiciary Committee’s oversight jurisdiction over the Department of Justice, I request a briefing no later than March 27, 2026, on the following:

1. The current duties and assignments of all employees nominally assigned to CRS, including the nine employees called back to duty, the 22 employees DOJ claims to have placed in the office, and the one employee transferred to EOUSA from CRS;
2. What CRS work, if any, these employees have been directed or permitted to perform since their assignment ,and which employees are performing it;
3. How DOJ is currently fulfilling its statutory obligations under Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §§ 2000g *et seq.*), the Church Arson Prevention Act, and the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act; and
4. All documents and communications between DOJ and OMB regarding the decision to eliminate CRS or withhold appropriated funding for CRS.

I look forward to your prompt compliance with this important oversight request.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman