

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-6906
judiciary.house.gov

June 15, 2026

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

Dear Director Patel:

We have been receiving troubling reports that you may be using part of the budget of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as a personal slush fund to make tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars in unlawful “bonus” payments to loyalist MAGA henchmen who have engaged in misconduct. We write to find out precisely how much slush fund largess you have put on the American taxpayer’s tab.

According to information received by the House Committee on the Judiciary, your office has issued more than \$1 million in awards to special agents serving on your “Director’s Advisory Team”¹—a curated group of agents who are willing to carry out your unlawful partisan and personal orders—and special agents on your security detail, circumventing the mandatory maximum pay caps established by statute.² By issuing these side payments, your office may be knowingly breaking federal law.³ In some cases, nearly \$8,000 payments have been made to multiple individuals *every two-week pay period* despite many of the beneficiaries of your selective generosity already maxing out on a federal employee’s salary.⁴ While it is unclear at this time exactly how much each of the agents has received, we can confirm that numerous loyalist employees have received at least five such payments in consecutive pay periods, amounting to nearly \$40,000 per agent. We can also confirm you have depleted the FBI reserve accounts for bonus payments at such a frenzied rate that some of the payments have bounced back from exhausted accounts.⁵ Why are these agents receiving extra pay simply for doing their jobs? Are they, in fact, collecting bonus compensation for engaging in actions outside of their duties and outside of the law?

¹ Glenn Thrush & Alan Feuer, *Under Patel, F.B.I. Scours Its Records to Discredit Trump Opponents*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 18, 2026), www.nytimes.com/2026/01/18/us/politics/kash-patel-grassley-payback.html.

² U.S. Office of Personnel Management, *Fact Sheet: Aggregate Limitation on Pay*, www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/pay-administration/fact-sheets/aggregate-limitation-on-pay/ (accessed June 12, 2026).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Information Received by the House Committee on the Judiciary, Minority.

⁵ Information Received by the House Committee on the Judiciary, Minority.

We know the agents on your Director’s Advisory Team—perhaps better known as “the Payback Squad” given their reported willingness to pursue political targets and overlook pesky legal obstacles like probable cause—have received a significant amount of these funds.⁶ These “Payback Squad” lieutenants have repaid your corrupt generosity by polygraphing FBI employees, including members of your security detail and information technology personnel suspected of not fully participating in the cover-up of your excessive drinking habits and erratic behavior, such as the famous episode in which you locked yourself out of your computer, panicked, and told staff and allies that you had been fired.⁷ For their part, the agents on your security detail have also witnessed your indiscretions at the Poodle Room, Ned’s, Rao’s, Lower Broadway, the Strip, the Milano Cortina Olympics, and beyond—when joining you on date nights and bro trips alike.⁸ It is not clear whether these bonus payments have simply been a corrupt attempt to slide cash to friends or whether they are also meant to ensure the silence of the agents who witness your inebriation and accompanying professional negligence and misconduct.⁹ Either way, these freelance awards appear to constitute gross mismanagement of public funds and an abuse of authority by the Director’s Office.

To be sure, federal workers deserve a raise, and I know that pay caps present an arbitrary obstacle to proper compensation for excellent and hard-working senior officials.¹⁰ The FBI Director also possesses authority to issue bonuses for outstanding performance. But rather than giving raises or bonuses to the FBI’s most dedicated and high-performing career special agents whom America counts on, you have fired those people for plainly political reasons. At Donald Trump’s behest, you unlawfully terminated former Acting Director Brian Driscoll, an FBI Medal of Valor Recipient who, as part of his storied career, raided terrorist compounds in the Middle East alongside Delta Force.¹¹ You fired Steven Jensen, who as head of the FBI’s Domestic Terrorism Operations Section, led the law enforcement response to the attack on our democracy

⁶ Jose Pagliery, *FBI Created ‘Payback Squad’ to Handle Political Cases, Sources Say*, NOTUS (May 12, 2026), www.notus.org/trump-white-house/fbi-kash-patel-trump-payback-squad-political-cases-james-comey-john-brennan.

⁷ Carol Leonnig & Ken Dilanian, *Kash Patel Ordered Polygraphs of More Than Two Dozen Members of His Team, Sources Say*, MS NOW (May 7, 2026), <https://www.ms.now/news/kash-patel-ordered-polygraphs-of-more-than-two-dozen-members-of-his-team-sources-tell-ms-now>; Sarah Fitzpatrick, *The FBI Director Is MIA*, THE ATLANTIC (Apr. 17, 2026), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/2026/04/kash-patel-fbi-director-drinking-absences/686839/>.

⁸ Sarah Fitzpatrick, *The FBI Director Is MIA*, THE ATLANTIC (Apr. 17, 2026), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/2026/04/kash-patel-fbi-director-drinking-absences/686839/>; Ryan J. Reilly, Michael Kosnar & David Rohde, *FBI Director Kash Patel Criticized for His Actions and Posts During Charlie Kirk Shooting Investigation*, NBC NEWS (Sept. 15, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/kash-patel-criticized-actions-posts-charlie-kirk-shooting-investigatio-rcna231043>; Rebecca Beitsch, *Democrats Investigate Patel’s Use of FBI Jet for ‘Date Night’ Travel, Other Excursions*, THE HILL (Dec. 2, 2025), <https://thehill.com/homenews/house/5629712-kash-patel-fbi-jet-house-judiciary-democrats/>.

⁹ Information Received by the House Committee on the Judiciary, Minority; Sarah Fitzpatrick, *The FBI Director Is MIA*, THE ATLANTIC (Apr. 17, 2026), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/2026/04/kash-patel-fbi-director-drinking-absences/686839/>.

¹⁰ Eric Wagner, *Bill to Alleviate Federal Pay Compression Introduced by House Dems*, GOVEXEC (Aug. 9, 2023), www.govexec.com/pay-benefits/2023/08/bill-alleviate-federal-pay-compression-introduced-house-dems/389273.

¹¹ Adam Goldman, *‘Accidental’ F.B.I. Chief Builds a Following as Agency’s Defender*, N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 4, 2025), www.nytimes.com/2025/02/04/us/politics/fbi-director-brian-driscoll-trump-justice-department.html.

on January 6, 2021.¹² You fired Walter Giardino, a decorated Marine combat veteran and 20-year FBI Special Agent, just weeks after his wife died from cancer, in retaliation for his work on the Robert Mueller investigation and the contempt of Congress case against Peter Navarro.¹³ You fired Steven Palmer, a 27-year FBI veteran who headed the Critical Incident Response Group and oversaw the FBI fleet, the day after news broke that you had taken the FBI's private jet to see your girlfriend perform at a Penn State event.¹⁴ You fired Michelle Ball, Jamie Garman, and Blaire Toleman, three FBI agents each with between eight and 14 years of unblemished service, in a "retribution campaign" targeting them for their work on the investigation of President Trump's unlawful retention of classified documents.¹⁵ Just days before the United States launched a major military operation against Iran, you fired a dozen agents and staff members from a counterintelligence unit specifically tasked with monitoring Iranian threats because they had also been involved in the Trump classified documents investigation.¹⁶

Your actions in firing agents like Mr. Driscoll, Mr. Jensen, Mr. Giardino, and Mr. Palmer, along with dozens of other consummate FBI professionals, are a scandal. That scandal is now deepened by your apparent practice of systematically rewarding lackeys and sycophants with illegal cash bonuses beyond federal salary caps. Federal money appropriated for the FBI's budget does not constitute a slush fund for you to reward agents to keep your abuses of power carefully hidden from view. To fully inform our ongoing investigation of waste, fraud, and civil and criminal abuse, please provide the following to the Committee no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 29, 2026:

1. A full account of all bonuses, awards, or other payments made in addition to any FBI agent or employee's salary, including but not limited to the amount awarded, who it was awarded to, and who authorized the award;
2. All documentation, including internal communications, regarding such bonuses, awards, or other payments;
3. A full list of individuals who serve or have served on your Director Advisory Team and their specific compensation, shown by pay period, over the last five years; and

¹² Michael Kosnar & Dareh Gregorian, *Former Acting FBI Director Involved in Jan. 6 Investigations Fired*, NBC NEWS (Aug. 7, 2025), www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/former-acting-fbi-director-involved-jan-6-investigations-fired-rcna223709.

¹³ Adam Goldman, et al., *Senior Agent Who Helped Oversee F.B.I.'s Response to Jan. 6 Is Fired*, N.Y. TIMES (Aug. 7, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/07/us/politics/trump-fbi.html>.

¹⁴ Ben Penn, *FBI Ousts Leader as Patel Fumes Over Attention to Agency Jet Use*, BLOOMBERG LAW (Nov. 1, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/fbi-ousts-leader-as-kash-patel-fumes-over-attention-to-agency-jet-use>.

¹⁵ Alan Feuer, *Fired F.B.I. Agents File Class-Action Suit Claiming Political Retaliation*, N.Y. TIMES (Mar. 31, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/03/31/us/politics/fbi-class-action-lawsuit-patel-bondi.html>.

¹⁶ Hannah Rabinowitz, *Kash Patel Gutted FBI Counterintelligence Team Tasked with Tracking Iranian Threats Days Before US Strikes, Sources Say*, CNN (Mar. 3, 2026), <https://www.cnn.com/2026/03/03/politics/patel-fbi-national-security-division-firings-iran>.

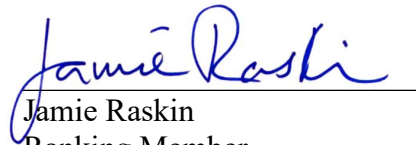
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4. All communications regarding the legality of award, settlement, or bonus payments issued by the FBI, including any memos or records indicating these payments might violate federal law.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman

Mr. M. Sean O'Neill, Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General