



**Statement of Stacey Young  
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**Hearing on “Restoring Accountability: Exposing Trump’s Attacks on the Rule of Law”  
Before Members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives  
Committees on the Judiciary**

**April 7, 2025**

Ranking Member Raskin, Ranking Member Durbin, Senator Schiff, and Members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to appear at this important hearing about the ongoing attacks on Department of Justice employees. After 18 years as a career litigator in DOJ’s Civil Rights and Civil Divisions, I recently founded Justice Connection, an organization mobilizing DOJ alumni to support the Department’s workforce.

The Justice Department’s 115,000 employees come to work every day to uphold the rule of law, keep our country safe, and protect our civil rights. All but a few hundred of these employees are career civil servants. The Department’s employees protect our communities from gun violence, prevent terrorist attacks on American soil, investigate and prosecute drug traffickers responsible for the deadly fentanyl epidemic—and the list goes on. Yet the Trump administration has unleashed an all-out assault on these public servants, who are now facing attacks on their employment, their integrity, their well-being, and even their safety.

Over the past three months, employees at all levels have been fired, suspended, demoted, and reassigned. They include senior career officials across the Department, including in law enforcement components like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). They also include officials assigned to cases disfavored by the administration. Many have been forced to resign rather than follow orders they concluded were unethical or unlawful.

The attacks on the Department’s workforce are too widespread and numerous to catalog in a single hearing, but I’d like to highlight three particular aspects that are especially alarming.

**First, the administration’s purge of senior career law enforcement and national security employees makes us less safe.** Congress should be deeply concerned about the termination of some of the most senior leaders at the FBI, and the ouster of top career officials from the Department’s National Security Division, Criminal Division, and ATF. Removing these investigators and prosecutors has left our communities more vulnerable to violent crime and terrorism. Proposals to restructure and downsize the Department’s law enforcement work—for example, by combining ATF and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)—will only make the problem worse.

**Second, the Department's political leadership is getting rid of career employees because they refuse to behave unethically.** To be clear, career employees should carry out the policy priorities of the executive branch, even when those priorities change across administrations. That's why long-term career lawyers like Erez Reuveni zealously represent the interests of the United States in controversial cases, regardless of underlying policy judgments. But Department officials must still follow ethical requirements, court rules, governing statutes, and the Justice Manual. Increasingly, career employees are being told that to keep their jobs, they must ignore their ethical duties and oath to uphold the Constitution. We should all be grateful to Erez Reuveni and others who choose the rule of law over partisan loyalty—a choice DOJ employees should never be forced to make.

**Finally, the acting U.S. Attorney in the District of Columbia has run roughshod over prosecutorial norms, threatened investigations of dedicated career prosecutors, and carried himself as a general in the President's war on his enemies instead of a backstop on crime in our nation's capital.** Ed Martin Jr. came to the job with no prosecutorial experience, and a history of representing defendants who his new office spent years successfully prosecuting for crimes on January 6. He's destabilized his office by firing prosecutors involved in those cases and demoting widely respected supervisors—cratering morale and unit cohesion, and eroding the judgment, experience, and institutional knowledge essential to the office's vital work. If his reign continues, D.C. will be far more vulnerable to drug trafficking, terrorist attacks, and violent crime.

The animus facing DOJ employees is unlike anything I saw in my nearly two decades of service, and I don't believe there's any precedent for it in the Department's history. We can't expect employees to counter these attacks alone. Protecting them and the DOJ's mission-critical work must be a top priority of every member of your committees, and of all Americans who will suffer if the Department is destroyed.