

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 4, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

We write with deep concern regarding the latest round of firings of career civil servants at the Department of Justice.¹ According to public reports, hundreds of Justice Department employees have been fired since January 2025, including at least 20 public servants in July who had assisted with the criminal investigations into President Trump's misuse of classified documents and 2020 election interference.² Many of these employees were fired without prior written notice, a reasonable time to respond, the opportunity to secure representation, or a written decision including specific reasons for their termination.³ The employees shamefully fired under your watch include not only prosecutors, but paralegals, finance staff, administrative support staff, and United States Marshals.⁴ Firing career administrative staff who lack decision-making authority because they were doing their jobs is a petty but pernicious abuse of power. Therefore, we are seeking information about your justifications, if any, for these draconian personnel actions.

This Administration's attacks on career civil servants at the Department of Justice are a terrible show of partisanship at the country's chief federal law enforcement agency. While falsely claiming to root out "waste, fraud, and abuse," you have instead abused your authority to indiscriminately fire career public servants who have dedicated their lives and talents to working on behalf of the American people in a nonpartisan manner. Moreover, by purging experienced national security professionals and other respected leaders, you are making our country more vulnerable and the Department less prepared for its long-held mission: to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights.

¹ Carrie Johnson, *3 fired DOJ workers add to chorus of layoffs in 'foundering' workforce*, NPR, <https://www.npr.org/2025/07/30/nx-s1-5476311/trump-fired-workers-justice-department#:~:text=3%20fired%20DOJ%20workers%20add%20to%20chorus%20of%20layoffs%20in%20%27foundering%27%20workforce> (July 30, 2025); Devlin Barrett, *Dismissals at Justice Dept. Would Bypass Civil Service and Whistle-Blower Laws*, N.Y. TIMES, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/15/us/politics/justice-department-dismissals-civil-service-laws.html> (July 15, 2025).

² Jacob Rosen and Scott MacFarlane, *Justice Department purge continues; firings include Trump classified document case investigators and Jan. 6 prosecutors*, CBS NEWS, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/justice-department-firings-include-trump-investigators-jan-6-prosecutors/> (July 12, 2025)

³ *Id.*; 5 U.S.C. § 7513; 5 U.S.C. § 7543

⁴ Jacob Rosen and Scott MacFarlane, *Justice Department purge continues; firings include Trump classified document case investigators and Jan. 6 prosecutors*, CBS NEWS, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/justice-department-firings-include-trump-investigators-jan-6-prosecutors/> (July 12, 2025)

These unprecedented firings are just the latest purge at the Department of Justice by the Trump Administration. In January, another approximately 20 senior Department officials were reassigned or removed from the Department of Justice, including the veteran career deputy assistant attorneys general in the Department's National Security Division.⁵ In February, the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) abruptly fired 20 immigration judges also without prior notice or specific cause.⁶ In April, the Deputy Attorney General fired the Pardon Attorney and later attempted to send armed Special Deputy U.S. Marshals to her home to deliver a letter, warning her not to appear before Members of Congress to share the details of her firing. We sent separate letters to you raising significant concerns about several of these firings and your office continues to fail to provide an adequate response to any of our inquiries.⁷

We are deeply concerned that you are brazenly firing employees in violation of federal civil service laws.⁸ Under 5 U.S.C. § 7513 and 5 U.S.C. § 7543, career civil servants at the Department of Justice are entitled to the following, prior to their termination⁹:

- (1) at least 30 days' advance written notice, unless there is reasonable cause to believe the employee has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed, stating the specific reasons for the proposed action;
- (2) a reasonable time, but not less than 7 days, to answer orally and in writing and to furnish affidavits and other documentary evidence in support of the answer;
- (3) be represented by an attorney or other representative; and
- (4) a written decision and the specific reasons therefor at the earliest practicable date.

Reports confirm that the Department of Justice employees who were fired under this Administration were instead terminated unexpectedly without the opportunity to respond, the opportunity to secure representation, or a written decision specifying reasons for their termination. You and other politically-appointed leaders at the Department of Justice appear to be willfully ignoring the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978's legal requirements for taking

⁵ 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-staffersnational-security-criminal>

⁶ Elliot Spagat, *Trump Justice Department Fires 20 immigration judges from backlogged courts*, L.A. TIMES (Feb. 15, 2025), <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2025-02-15/trump-justice-department-fires-20-immigrationjudges>

⁷ February 3, 2025 Letter from Senate Judiciary Committee Democrats to then Nominee to be Attorney General of the United States Pamela Jo Bondi, <https://www.durbin.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2025-02-03%20SJC%20Dems%20Letter%20to%20Bondi%20re%20Purges.pdf>; March 28, 2025 Letter from Senate Judiciary Committee Democrats to Attorney General of the United States Pam Bondi, https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2025-03-28%20-%20Letter%20to%20DOJ%20re%20IJ%20Firings_12qlmkzmox3c.pdf; April 23, 2025 Letter from Senator Adam Schiff, Senator Cory Booker, and House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Jamie Raskin to Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, <https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025.04.23-Letter-to-DAG-Blanche-on-Oyer-Marshals.pdf>.

⁸ Devlin Barrett, *Dismissals at Justice Dept. Would Bypass Civil Service and Whistle-Blower Laws*, N.Y. TIMES, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/15/us/politics/justice-department-dismissals-civil-service-laws.html> (July 15, 2025).

⁹ 5 U.S.C. § 7513 governs adverse actions against competitive service employees and 5 U.S.C. § 7543 governs actions against Senior Executive Service (SES) members.

adverse actions against career civil servants. Instead, you have repeatedly used boilerplate language to inform employees a variation of the following:

“Pursuant to Article II of the United States Constitution and the laws of the United States, you are removed from federal service effective immediately.”¹⁰

Those dismissed since January are patriots and public servants. Your dismissal of their service without prior notice and without cause is a grave injustice that mocks the American ideal of nonpartisan government. Firing these public servants without cause is antidemocratic at best and likely unlawful.

In order to fulfill Congress’s constitutional duty to conduct oversight of the Department of Justice, we request detailed answers to the following questions no later than September 12, 2025:

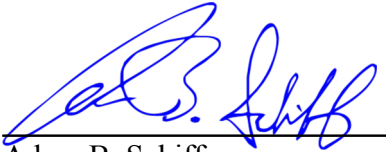
1. What criteria has the Department of Justice used to determine which employees would be fired since January 21, 2025?
2. What laws, if any, were relied upon to authorize firing these employees?
3. How many individual years of service did each Department of Justice employee fired since January 21, 2025, have at the Department?
 - a. How many collective years of service did the Department of Justice employees fired since January 21, 2025, have at the Department?
4. For each Department of Justice employee fired since January 21, 2025, please list each case they were assigned to and worked on.
 - a. Please include the employees’ specific responsibilities in each of those cases.
 - b. Please indicate who in the Department will assume the employees’ specific responsibilities in each of those cases.
5. Were the supervisors of each of the Department of Justice employees fired since January 21, 2025, consulted prior to the employees’ termination?
 - a. If so, did each of their supervisors expressly agree that they should be terminated?
 - b. If not, why were the employees terminated without their supervisors’ consent or knowledge?

Your inability to provide these dedicated public servants with statutorily required notice or specific reasons for their terminations is clear evidence that the firings are unlawful. These dedicated public servants appear to have been fired as an act of revenge for performing their duties to investigate violations of U.S. criminal laws.

¹⁰ Perry Stein, *Firings without explanation create culture of fear at Justice Dept., FBI*, WASH. POST <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/07/10/fbi-justice-dept-firings-trump-bondi> (July 10, 2025)

We look forward to your prompt response and urge you to comply with federal law by upholding civil service protections for all Department of Justice employees.

Sincerely,




Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



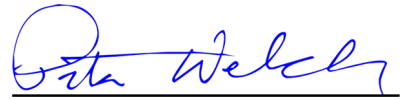
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator