

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 15, 2026

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

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

We write to urge you to categorically reject efforts by pardoned January 6 insurrectionists to seek tens of millions of taxpayer dollars in payouts from the Department of Justice. As the Nation reflects on the fifth anniversary of the violent attack on the U.S. Capitol, and mourns the lives lost, we urge you to publicly reject these efforts to reward January 6 rioters for their criminal acts at the expense of American taxpayers.

We are deeply disappointed by the failure of the Department to respond to our May 2, 2025 and September 29, 2025 letters, which made clear that using taxpayer funds to reward January 6 insurrectionists would not only be insulting to the American public, but would also flout federal law. The January 6 insurrectionists left nearly \$3 million in property damages in their wake and injured more than 100 law enforcement officers. The blanket pardon issued in January 2025 does not erase the real harm caused during the attack or the Department's legal obligations to protect taxpayers from frivolous claims.

It is clear that these insurrectionists and their attorneys are trying every possible avenue to enrich themselves at taxpayer expense. Leaders of the Proud Boys have filed a lawsuit seeking \$100 million in damages. Another attorney states he has had several "positive meetings" with senior DOJ official Ed Martin regarding cash rewards for January 6 rioters and is proposing a 9/11 style compensation fund.¹ It bears repeating—the power of the purse belongs to Congress. Put simply, the Department does not have unilateral authority to create a fund to reward the January 6 insurrectionists, and we will adamantly oppose any effort in Congress to authorize one.

In addition, there is credible public reporting that nearly 400 insurrectionists have brought claims under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA), seeking \$1 million to \$10 million *per individual* for alleged injuries and property damage they sustained when they were arrested and prosecuted for storming the Capitol on January 6.² Given these insurrectionists waited years to raise these claims, most of them are presumably barred by the FTCA's two-year statute of limitations, but the public reporting indicates that the Justice Department has not yet rejected the claims. Given the concerns raised by the ongoing reporting of insurrectionists lobbying the Department for cash payouts, we request timely responses to the following questions:

¹ Alan Feuer and Dan Barry, *For Many Jan. 6 Rioters, a Pardon From Trump Wasn't Enough*, The New York Times (Jan. 5, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/05/us/politics/trump-jan-6-pardons-rioters.html>.

² Zoe Tillman, *Trump Pardoned Them for Jan. 6. Now They Want Millions of Dollars*, Bloomberg Government (Dec. 10, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-12-10/trump-pardoned-them-for-jan-6-now-they-want-millions-of-dollars>.

1. How many claims under the FTCA related to the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021 has the Department received?
2. Has the statute of limitations run on any of the claims identified in response to Question 1?
3. Has the Department rejected any FTCA claims related to the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021? If so, when, how many claims, and on what grounds?
4. Has the Department approved any FTCA claims related to the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021? If so, when, how many claims, and what was the total compensation?
5. Has anyone with the Department participated in discussions with individuals prosecuted for their involvement in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, or with their representative(s) about settling any FTCA claims or other ongoing litigation?
6. Has anyone with the Department participated in discussions with individuals prosecuted for their involvement in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, or with their representative(s) about setting up a special panel or compensation fund to award funds to those who participated in the attack?
7. What steps, if any, has the Department taken to set up a special panel or compensation fund to financially compensate any individuals prosecuted for their involvement in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021?

Finally, you should put an end to this money grab by publicly committing that the Department will not attempt to create a compensation fund, will reject all related FTCA claims, and will vigorously defend the taxpayers in any related lawsuits.

The Department of Justice has so far failed to respond to either of our previous letters on this topic, but the American public is owed an explanation. We ask that the Department provide a written response to this letter no later than January 30, 2026.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Rules and Administration



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Senate
Committee on the Judiciary



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator