



October 5, 2026

Sent via electronic mail

The Honorable John Cornyn, Chair
Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and
Border Safety
Senate Judiciary Committee
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC. 20510

The Honorable Alex Padilla, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and
Border Safety
Senate Judiciary Committee
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC. 20510

Re: Protected Whistleblower Disclosure of Jill Fields regarding violations of law, rule, regulation and abuse of authority in FBI Investigations into Protestors

Dear All:

Government Accountability Project and David Laufman represent Jill Fields, a former Supervisory Intelligence Analyst at the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Los Angeles Field Office. Pursuant to 5 USC § 2303 as implemented by 28 C.F.R Part 27, Ms. Fields submits the following whistleblower disclosures regarding instances of directives issued by former Acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove and by the White House to FBI Director Kash Patel in 2025 to FBI leadership to initiate investigations into individuals protesting immigration enforcement actions in Los Angeles by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and the FBI based solely on the protestors' First Amendment-protected activity in violation of constitutional protections and FBI policy. Ms. Fields reasonably believes these directives and the related investigations and assessments evidenced violations of law and abuse of authority. Having raised these concerns internally and suffered subsequent reprisal that compelled her exit from the FBI, Ms. Fields is reporting these concerns to your offices for oversight action.

I. BACKGROUND

Ms. Fields is a former Supervisory Intelligence Analyst at the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office (Field Office). A licensed attorney in Mississippi since 2006 and in California since 2008, Ms. Fields joined the FBI in May 2016 and spent her first six years working on counterterrorism matters, including a joint duty assignment as an FBI Liaison Officer at the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Counterterrorism Mission Center. In January 2022, she became a Supervisory Intelligence Analyst in the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office and led intelligence efforts for the Violent Incident Crimes-Domestic and Transnational Organized Crime programs.

In early 2025, Los Angeles became a focal point of escalating tensions over federal immigration enforcement as the Trump administration expanded ICE and CBP operations and prioritized large-scale arrests and removals, including in previously protected "sensitive" locations

such as schools, places of worship, and hospitals.¹ By early February 2025, these policies had already triggered significant public backlash, including large protests in Los Angeles and across the country opposing immigration raids and targeting of immigrant communities.² Ms. Fields's disclosures involve directives from senior DOJ leadership to FBI Field Office leadership to open investigations into anti-ICE and CBP protestors absent from any grounds other than their First Amendment-protected activity, in violation of constitutional protections and FBI policy under the Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG).

II. DISCLOSURES

A. *First Disclosure: January–February 2025 Directive to Investigate Immigration Protestors at Federal Buildings in Los Angeles*

This disclosure concerns what Ms. Fields reasonably believed was the misuse of FBI intelligence and law enforcement authorities to target anti-ICE and CBP protestors in Los Angeles engaged in First Amendment-protected activity at the direction of then-Acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove.

1) DOJ Former Acting Deputy Attorney General Bove Directs Los Angeles Field Office to Open Investigation Into Anti-ICE and CBP Protestors

From the very start of the second Trump administration, Ms. Fields and her colleagues at the Los Angeles Field Office were instructed by Field Office leadership, including the Assistant Director in Charge (ADIC), the Special Agents in Charge (SACs), the Assistant Special Agents in Charge (ASACs), and the Senior Supervisory Intelligence Analysts (SSIAs), through emails and directives in meetings, to support what they called a nationwide “big immigration push” to take place across multiple “weeks of action” that would begin in February and continue throughout the year.³ The initiative included assigning agents Title 8 authorities, directing intelligence analysts to conduct checks on lists of immigrants, and supporting immigration-related arrests across FBI Field Offices nationwide. During meetings on this initiative, Ms. Fields experienced supervisors encouraging her and others to not put things in writing and noticed many directives and subsequent discussions were conducted in face-to-face meetings rather than over email.

In one-on-one meetings and during an Intelligence Branch meeting, [REDACTED] informed Ms. Fields that FBI Los Angeles Intelligence Division SAC Krysti Hawkins wanted Ms.

¹ Rae Deng, “Trump Promised Mass Arrests of Undocumented Migrants ‘on Day 1.’ Here’s What Has Happened,” *Snopes*, January 23, 2025, <https://www.snopes.com/news/2025/01/23/ice-raids-what-we-know/>; Arthur J. Fried, Melissa L. Jampol, Sharon C. Peters, John W. Eriksen, Raja Sékaran, and James (Jim) P. Flynn, “Trump’s Immigration Orders Increase ICE Enforcement,” *National Law Review*, January 28, 2025, <https://natlawreview.com/article/trump-administrations-immigration-enforcement-policy-what-hospitals-and-health-0>; Elizabeth Jacobs, “History of the ‘Sensitive Areas’ Policies and What Is in Place Now,” *Center for Immigration Studies*, March 7, 2025, <https://cis.org/Jacobs/History-Sensitive-Areas-Policies-and-What-Place-Now>.

² “Marchers protesting planned deportations block major freeway in Los Angeles,” *Associated Press*, February 3, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-ice-protests-los-angeles-california-dallas-ecf1afef642ffff40117f88641c8605f>; Giovanna Dell’Orto and Melissa Perez Winder, “Some U.S. businesses close in a ‘day without immigrants’ protest,” *Associated Press*, February 3, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-policy-trump-protest-business-82ffcd5392bda94bc54419b3d5731ae8>.

³ Emily Bazelon and Rachel Poser, “Trump, Kash Patel and the F.B.I. Agents,” *The New York Times*, January 22, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2026/01/22/magazine/trump-kash-patel-fbi-agents.html>.

Fields to lead the intelligence component of these efforts because violent crime and transnational crime were her areas of expertise. To support the immigration push, the Los Angeles Field Office established a dedicated immigration squad focused solely on immigration matters. The squad consisted of approximately ten agents, many of whom were reassigned from the cartels squad, while others were drawn from volunteers or personnel directed to participate. Los Angeles is a major transshipment hub for drug trafficking and Ms. Fields questioned the directive's operational logic, as agents were pulled off active cartel cases to satisfy what her supervisor, [REDACTED], described as "optics" designed to "make a show for the president." Ms. Fields became responsible for managing the Intelligence Program's component of the immigration push and the Intelligence Program personnel embedded in the new squad.

In late January or early February 2025, shortly before a standing 4:00 pm Pacific Time meeting including SACs, ASACs, SSIs, and the Los Angeles Criminal Program's Mission Support Analyst regarding the immigration push, [REDACTED] came to Ms. Fields's office, shut the door, and informed her that Department of Justice (DOJ) former Acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove had instructed Akil Davis, the ADIC of the Los Angeles FBI Field Office, to open an investigation into any anti-ICE and CBP protesters demonstrating at federal buildings in Los Angeles. This information surprised Ms. Fields because investigations against protestors solely for First Amendment activity are explicitly illegal and contrary to FBI policy.

Protests at federal buildings, including the Los Angeles Federal Building on Wilshire Boulevard and FBI facilities, were not uncommon, and peaceful demonstrations were ordinarily handled by building security personnel or, where appropriate, local law enforcement agencies. Public safety and crowd management for protests occurring on city streets, sidewalks, and other local public spaces generally fall within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and other local law enforcement agencies, while the FBI's role is limited to investigating violations of federal law and threats to national security. Throughout her FBI career, Ms. Fields received repeated training regarding the constitutional protections afforded to First Amendment activity and the FBI's obligation not to initiate investigative activity based solely on an individual's exercise of protected speech, association, or protest rights. Ms. Fields was therefore surprised because [REDACTED] described a directive focused on opening investigations into protesters based solely on their participation in anti-ICE and CBP demonstrations, rather than on information indicating a federal crime, threat to national security, or other authorized basis for FBI investigative activity.

It was also odd in Ms. Fields's experience that [REDACTED] sought Ms. Fields out to share this information with her directly and did not mention it in the meeting that followed shortly thereafter since the information was related to immigration matters. In this one-on-one conversation, [REDACTED] shared that they had just been informed of the directive through their chain of command: former Acting Deputy Attorney General Bove had called ADIC Akil Davis, directly; ADIC Davis relayed the directive to SAC Krysti Hawkins; and SAC Hawkins then communicated it to [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] appeared distressed by this news, and Ms. Fields knew from her training and experience that it was extraordinarily unusual for the DOJ or an Acting Deputy Attorney General to directly contact an ADIC regarding the opening of an FBI investigative matter. Ms. Fields also knew based on her experience that the FBI does not open assessments or investigations based on

First Amendment protected activity, unless there were actual or potential national security threats or federal criminal activity, or vulnerability to such threats, none of which had been identified here. Ms. Fields was not aware of any actual or potential national security threat, federal criminal activity, or vulnerability that would have justified opening assessments or investigations of anti-ICE and CBP protesters at that time. Based on her training and experience, had there been a credible threat to a federal facility, federal employees, or public safety requiring FBI investigative action, that information ordinarily would have been communicated through established security and operational channels. For example, FBI personnel routinely received notifications about security threats affecting personnel or facilities, including protests, building security concerns, and environmental hazards. In this case, Ms. Fields was not made aware of any threat information relating to the protesters, and no such threat was identified in the assessment-opening directive she received. Her understanding was therefore that the focus of the proposed assessment activity was the protesters' participation in anti-ICE and CBP demonstrations rather than information indicating a federal crime, national security threat, or vulnerability to such threats.

2) Type 3 Assessment Ordered Into Anti-ICE and CBP Protestors

When ADIC Davis relayed the directive to the Field Office Intelligence Division, he also ordered the creation of a Type 3 Assessment, which requires an authorized purpose—limited narrowly to actual or potential national security threats, federal criminal activities, or the vulnerability to such threats or activities—and clearly defined objective, which is to identify, obtain and utilize information about said threats. The basis cannot be arbitrary or groundless speculation.⁴

The authorized investigative methods for a Type 3 Assessment include: public information; FBI and DOJ records or information; other federal, state, local, tribal, or foreign government agency records or information; online services and resources; Confidential Human Source use and recruitment; interviews or requests for information from public or private entities; information voluntarily provided by governmental or private entities; consent searches; and physical surveillance not requiring a court order.⁵ Notably, a Type 3 Assessment may not infringe on First Amendment-protected rights and must be an appropriate use of personnel and financial resources.⁶

⁴ Exhibit 1, *FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)* (Feb. 27, 2024), §5.6.3.2. A Type 3 Assessment is one of the FBI's formally defined assessment categories under the Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)..

⁵ Exhibit 1, *FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)* (Feb. 27, 2024), §§ 18.5.1, 18.5.2, 18.5.3.1, 18.5.4–18.5.8.

⁶ Exhibit 1, *FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)* (Feb. 27, 2024), §5.6.3.2. *See also* U.S. Department of Justice, *Attorney General's Guidelines for Domestic FBI Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, December 1, 2008), §§ I.C.3, III.B.3.a, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/docs/guidelines.pdf> (AGG-DOM also imposes an additional policy constraint beyond the constitutional floor of first-amendment protected activity. Although the First Amendment prohibits government action targeting protected expression, the Attorney General's Guidelines for Domestic FBI Operations ("AGG-DOM") further require that FBI investigative activity not be based solely on activities protected by the First Amendment and that the FBI safeguard constitutional rights when conducting domestic operations. The DIOG operationalizes these DOJ-wide requirements and, in some circumstances, imposes more specific restrictions governing the opening and conduct of assessments and investigations.).

The directive to conduct a Type 3 Assessment on a wide-swath of anti-ICE and CBP protestors was problematic because, in Ms. Fields's view, it sought to use investigative methods to scrutinize individuals engaged in lawful First Amendment expression and assembly activity in the absence of any identified threat of violence, criminal conduct, or national security concern. The DIOG expressly identifies the opening of an assessment or investigation solely because of a group's social or political agenda as improper and further provides that individuals or groups who oppose government policies, protest government actions, advocate social or political causes, promote religious beliefs, or recruit others to join such causes retain a fundamental constitutional right to engage in those activities. The DIOG specifically states that “[a]n Assessment may not be opened solely based on the exercise of these First Amendment rights,” although an Assessment may be appropriate where a group also threatens or advocates violence or destruction of property.⁷ Ms. Fields knew of no information indicating that any anti-ICE and CBP protestors had threatened or advocated violence or destruction of property.

The purpose for which the FBI ordinarily opens a Type 3 Assessment further underscored the unusual nature of the directive [REDACTED] gave Ms. Fields. Under the DIOG, the FBI uses Type 3 Assessments to identify, obtain, and utilize information about actual or potential national security threats or federal criminal activities, or the vulnerability to such threats. The DIOG further explains that the FBI may proactively undertake an Assessment to detect criminal activity or to obtain information about individuals, groups, or organizations of possible investigative interest because they may engage in criminal or national-security-threatening activities or because such activities may target them for attack or victimization. Thus, even when the FBI does not know the identity of a specific offender, the FBI ordinarily opens a Type 3 Assessment to better understand an actual or potential threat and to identify the individuals or entities responsible for that threat.

The following examples illustrate that the FBI ordinarily begins with suspected criminal or national-security-related conduct and then seeks to identify the responsible actors, not the reverse. For example, the Field Office might open a Type 3 Assessment to determine whether fentanyl trafficking is occurring within the Los Angeles area where available information indicates that trafficking activity exists but does not identify the responsible individuals. The FBI might also open a Type 3 Assessment to determine whether a particular cartel is trafficking fentanyl within the Los Angeles area. In that circumstance, the focus of the Assessment remains the cartel's actual or potential trafficking activity, rather than the cartel itself, because the activity could constitute a violation of federal criminal law and a threat to national security. Similarly, the FBI might open a Type 3 Assessment to determine whether a known terrorist organization is using propaganda to radicalize individuals within the Area of Responsibility, which would not be First Amendment-protected activity because of the threat to national security intended by the organization's attempted recruitment for violence.

⁷ Exhibit 1, *FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)* (Feb. 27, 2024), § 4.2.4 (stating that courts have found it legally objectionable to open an investigation solely because of a group's social or political agenda); id. § 5.2 (providing that individuals and groups who oppose war or foreign policy, protest government actions, promote religious beliefs, champion social or political causes, advocate governmental change through noncriminal means, or recruit others to join such causes possess a fundamental constitutional right to do so, and that “[a]n Assessment may not be opened solely based on the exercise of these First Amendment rights,” absent circumstances such as threats or advocacy of violence or destruction of property).

In each example, the FBI directs the Assessment toward conduct that could constitute federal criminal activity or a national-security threat and seeks to identify the individuals or entities engaged in that conduct. By contrast, the directive [REDACTED] described to Ms. Fields identified anti-ICE and CBP protesters as the subject of investigative attention because they demonstrated at federal buildings, without identifying any actual or potential national-security threat, federal criminal activity, or vulnerability to such threats that would supply the authorized purpose for the Assessment. Based on her training and experience, Ms. Fields reasonably believed there was no authorized investigative purpose that justified a Type 3 Assessment.

3) Ms. Fields Protests and Refuses to Open Type 3 Assessment of Anti-ICE and CBP Protestors

During that one-on-one meeting, [REDACTED] indicated that they and Ms. Fields were expected to draft the opening electronic communication (EC) for this assessment.⁸ Ms. Fields objected to [REDACTED] that initiating an assessment solely because individuals were protesting was illegal political retribution and would violate their First Amendment rights.⁹ [REDACTED] agreed with Ms. Fields's concerns but stated that "we have to." [REDACTED] expressed to Ms. Fields that they felt like they had no choice and feared being fired if they refused the directive and that they could not afford that or any potential risks to their family.

For all openings of assessments and investigations, an EC is drafted in Sentinel, the FBI's secure case management and records system, which serves as the official repository for investigative and intelligence matters. The EC outlines the purpose and scope of the matter to be opened, as well as the planned investigative and intelligence matters. For Assessments, the drafter is normally an Intelligence Analyst (IA) or a Special Agent (SA), and the approver is the Supervisory Intelligence Analyst (SIA) for IAs or Supervisory Special Agent (SSA) for SAs. The EC must have specific language to identify the authorized purpose for the assessment and document the justification for opening the matter.

In this case, since the Intelligence Program would be opening the Type 3, an IA should have written the opening EC, and the SIA would have approved it. Instead, [REDACTED] requested that an SIA, Ms. Fields, write the opening EC. When Ms. Fields refused, [REDACTED] assigned another SIA to write it instead. [REDACTED] approved the opening EC drafted by the other SIA. Because this assessment would have fallen under Violent Incident Crimes-Domestic, the squad

⁸ Exhibit 1, *FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)* (Feb. 27, 2024), §5.6.3.2.

⁹ The FBI is not allowed to investigate individuals based on First Amendment-protected activity. *See* FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG) (Feb. 27, 2024), § 4.2 ("Protection of First Amendment Rights") ("investigative activity may not be based solely on the exercise of rights guaranteed by the First Amendment"); *see also* DIOG § 3.3.1.4 (directing FBI personnel to "[c]onduct no investigative activity based solely on the exercise of First Amendment rights") and § 5.3.6.5 (requiring closure of complaints where the information received is based solely on First Amendment-protected activity); FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG) § 3.1.1 (Feb. 27, 2024) ("All FBI personnel must fully comply with all laws, rules, and regulations" governing FBI activities and "[u]nder no circumstances will expediency justify disregard for the law"); *ibid.* § 3.3.1.5 (requiring personnel to "[e]nsure compliance" with DIOG standards governing the opening, conduct, and closing of investigative activities and the use of investigative methods); *ibid.* § 3.3.1.6 (directing personnel to "[c]omply with the law, rules, or regulations, and report any non-compliance concern to the proper authority"); *see also ibid.* § 3.1.1 (requiring FBI employees to report known or suspected failures to comply with applicable laws, rules, or regulations).

Ms. Fields's managed should have had case management responsibility for this Type 3, but after her refusal, it went to another SIA who was the Intelligence Coordinator for Violent Incident Crimes - International Program and their squad to manage. The fact that another supervisory official prepared the opening EC was itself unusual because opening documentation for this type of assessment ordinarily would have been drafted by an Intelligence Analyst and reviewed by supervisory personnel. Ms. Fields reasonably believed that management intentionally bypassed frontline personnel, including line agents and line analysts to avoid objections and resistance.

When Ms. Fields read the opening EC, she saw that the justification for the Type 3 Assessment framed the matter as an inquiry into potential threats associated with the protests, including threats to locations, the protestors themselves, and law enforcement. Although the opening EC articulated a facially permissible purpose, Ms. Fields believed that justification was pretextual and did not reflect the actual reason the assessment had been ordered. Ms. Fields understood from her conversation with [REDACTED] that the actual purpose was to create an investigative file targeting solely protest activity itself. The opening EC also stated that the assessment was being opened at the direction of Acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove. Ms. Fields reasonably believed the inclusion of this language was an effort by the drafters to document that they were acting pursuant to orders from senior leadership at the Department of Justice rather than based on independent investigative judgment.

After the assessment was opened, the Field Office's social media monitoring personnel were directed to conduct advance monitoring of online activity associated with planned demonstrations during late February 2025. Ms. Fields learned from [REDACTED] that Field Office management used the Type 3 Assessment as the repository for social media collection and search activity relating to the protests. She believed this was an improper use of a Type 3 Assessment because a Type 3 Assessment should not be used to proactively search for information on individuals engaged solely in protected speech activity.¹⁰

Several FBI employees in the Field Office expressed concern with the legality and propriety of these activities. Ms. Fields discussed the matter with [REDACTED], who acknowledged her concerns and stated that management had found a justification for the activity for "an identified authorized purpose" and "clearly defined objective" through existing language used in the Type 3 Assessment for the George Floyd and Black Lives Matter demonstrations. Though those prior matters involved documented threats and security concerns that were absent in this case, the use of Type 3 Assessments there was also regarded as controversial because they implicated First Amendment-protected rights and the authorized purpose and clearly defined objective were precarious. Ms. Fields voiced her disagreement with that justification to [REDACTED], believing that management's justification was pretextual since the underlying basis for the current assessment was the protestors' exercise of First Amendment rights.

B. Second Disclosure: FBI Director Kash Patel Directed by the White House to Investigate Anti-ICE and CBP Protesters in Alhambra After Seeing TikTok Video

¹⁰ Exhibit 1, *FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG)* (Feb. 27, 2024), §5.6.3.2 (prohibiting the use of Type 3 Assessments to violate First Amendment rights).

Later in February 2025, Ms. Fields received a second directive, this time communicated down from the White House to Kash Patel to investigate anti-ICE and CBP protestors, again based solely on their exercise of First Amendment-protected activity.

On February 26, 2025, a group of anti-ICE and CBP protesters recorded and posted on social media an FBI immigration arrest occurring in a neighborhood in Alhambra, California. According to information communicated to Ms. Fields directly by [REDACTED], FBI headquarters became aware of the video that same day after it circulated publicly on social media.¹¹ The video posted by the League of United Latin American Citizens (“LULAC”), depicts community members in a residential neighborhood using megaphones and other alerts to warn residents about the presence of immigration enforcement officers, while advising neighbors of their legal rights and encouraging them not to open their doors without a signed judicial warrant. [REDACTED] informed Ms. Fields that the President viewed the footage on social media and instructed FBI Director Kash Patel to have the Los Angeles Field Office open an investigation into the protesters. [REDACTED] explained that during FBI Director Kash Patel's first meeting with FBI Special Agents in Charge, participants had been informed that the President had viewed video footage of the Alhambra protesters, he was angry about the incident, and he wanted those protesters investigated and arrested.

On the afternoon of February 26, 2025, one of Ms. Fields's analysts, [REDACTED], embedded with C-1 squad, the Criminal Program squad that covers activities including violent crimes, fugitives, and bank robberies, informed her that the squad had been ordered to run pre-assessment checks on the two to four anti-ICE and CBP protesters in the video accused of impeding an immigration arrest, even though FBI policy prohibits opening investigations based solely on First Amendment-protected activity, and the squad did not yet have evidence of a crime.¹² Ms. Fields advised [REDACTED] that limited preliminary checks could be conducted to determine whether any facts supported criminal predication but emphasized that no investigative activity beyond those preliminary reviews would be appropriate absent evidence of a crime.¹³

On the morning of February 28, 2025, Ms. Fields saw an email which indicated that FBI agents in Los Angeles, led by [REDACTED], had conducted standard pre-assessment checks and determined that the protesters' actions—video recording, use of a megaphone, and verbal objection—were constitutionally protected under the First Amendment and never crossed the line into impeding arrest or being a threat. Accordingly, the C-1 squad declined to open an investigation. [REDACTED] prepared a written email recommendation to close the matter, using language drawn from the DIOG, explaining that there was insufficient basis to open an assessment or a predicated

¹¹ @lulacorg, “TikTok video,” TikTok, February 26, 2025, <https://www.tiktok.com/@lulacorg/video/7475866657626262826>.

¹² See *supra* note 6.

¹³ FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG) (Feb. 27, 2024), § 5.3.5 (“If an authorized purpose exists, but information is not sufficient enough to open an Assessment or predicated investigation, the employee must determine whether the use of any permitted investigative methods will assist in evaluating the complaint”); *ibid.* § 5.3.9 (authorizing limited investigative methods during complaint processing prior to opening an Assessment or predicated investigation); see also *ibid.* § 5.5 (requiring an authorized purpose and clearly defined objectives before opening an Assessment), and § 6.1 (providing that a Preliminary Investigation may be opened only upon “allegation or information” indicative of possible criminal activity or a threat to national security).

investigation.¹⁴ This recommendation was circulated by email to management personnel, including Intelligence and Criminal Program leadership.

Later that morning, [REDACTED] informed Ms. Fields that an investigation would nevertheless be opened, asserting that “the President wants this investigation.” Ms. Fields learned from [REDACTED] that the President’s directive had been communicated through FBI leadership and ultimately transmitted to career personnel within the Field Office. When Ms. Fields objected to her supervisor [REDACTED] that such an action was unconstitutional and prohibited under the DIOG, [REDACTED] acknowledged the investigation was unconstitutional but stated that the directive had to be followed.¹⁵ When Ms. Fields refused to participate, her supervisor warned that she could be fired if she did not follow the order. Ms. Fields maintained her refusal to participate in the investigation.¹⁶

Following that conversation, Ms. Fields sought guidance from senior FBI officials responsible for privacy and civil liberties matters. At approximately 2:30 p.m. Pacific Time on February 28, Ms. Fields called the FBI’s Office of General Counsel Deputy Assistant Director (DAD) Erin Prest and reported what she had been told: that a criminal investigation was being pursued because the President wanted protestors investigated and arrested even after a finding, reflected in [REDACTED] recommendation, that the protestors’ actions were constitutionally protected.¹⁷ DAD Prest expressed dismay and agreed that the conduct at issue constituted First Amendment protected activity, noting that the FBI does not open cases simply because the President wants one opened and that the Bureau must remain neutral and nonpartisan.¹⁸ DAD Prest stated that she would contact FBI Los Angeles Chief Division Counsel [REDACTED] and would follow up the next week with an update.

On Tuesday, March 4, 2025, around 2:00 p.m. Pacific Time, DAD Prest called Ms. Fields and informed her that she had consulted with [REDACTED] regarding the matter. DAD Prest explained that she had initially left a message for [REDACTED] regarding a case involving protestors, and that they had first responded that they knew what she meant and that the issue had been addressed. However, [REDACTED] later called back DAD Prest and explained they had been mistaken; they had only just learned of the Alhambra protestors matter and the Chief Division Counsel Office had not provided any advice on it. DAD Prest informed [REDACTED] that an investigation could not be opened simply because the President wanted it opened, and [REDACTED] agreed, stating they would address the issue and that no investigation would be opened.

DAD Prest also shared with Ms. Fields that this was her final phone call before leaving the office and the FBI, as she was resigning, and that she had passed all relevant information to the FBI Inspection Division, identifying the new Acting DAD as the point of contact for follow-up by

¹⁴ See FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide (DIOG) §§ 3.5.2.1 (“Approval/Review of Investigative or Collection Activities”), 5.3.5 (“Complaints Processed by Field Offices”), 5.3.6 (“Supervisory Evaluation of a Complaint or Guardian Incident”), and 5.3.6.5 (“Close the Complaint or Guardian Incident”), which directs closure where the information received is based solely on activities protected by the First Amendment and does not constitute a threat, criminal activity, or other authorized basis for investigation.

¹⁵ Exhibit 2, *Handwritten note from Ms. Fields detailing discussion with [REDACTED]* (February 28, 2025).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Exhibit 3, *Handwritten note from Ms. Fields detailing phone call with DAD Erin Prest* (February 28, 2025).

¹⁸ Exhibit 3, *Handwritten note from Ms. Fields detailing phone call with DAD Erin Prest* (February 28, 2025).

the Inspection Division. Though DAD Prest did not include Ms. Fields's name in the referral to the Inspection Division, DAD Prest did tell the Acting DAD that Ms. Fields was the source of the report. However, Ms. Fields never received any notice that follow-up action was taken on her report following the conversations with DAD Prest.

Following these events, [REDACTED] made a point in meetings and legal trainings to emphasize that no assessment or investigation could be opened based solely on First Amendment activity, and that any questions about First Amendment-protected activity should be directed to them for review and advice. They also clarified that yelling at agents does not constitute "impeding" an operation, which requires a "forcible act," and stated they were available to answer questions about whether conduct met that standard. Ms. Fields reasonably assessed that these repeated warnings were an acknowledgment that the Alhambra matter had raised serious constitutional and policy concerns within the FBI, but she is unaware of any other outcome of her reports.

Ms. Fields does not know whether a formal investigation was ultimately opened in FBI systems because she was excluded from further involvement after objecting. However, she observed that personnel and analytical resources were immediately diverted from ongoing criminal investigations to address the Alhambra matter. For example, analyst [REDACTED] was temporarily removed from an ongoing major criminal case assignment to work on the protest investigation, and another analyst was reassigned from transnational organized crime and cargo-theft matters to support the effort. In Ms. Fields's view, these actions reflected the extraordinary priority that leadership placed on pursuing the matter despite substantial concerns regarding its legal and constitutional basis and despite its impact removing personnel from ongoing criminal matters.

C. Internal Knowledge of the Disclosures and Subsequent Retaliation

In addition to the individuals to whom Ms. Fields directly reported her concerns, she believes that ADIC Akil Davis would have been notified through the Inspection Division that she had made a disclosure to DAD Prest and that the Acting DAD or the Chief Division Counsel Office would have initiated an investigation into her disclosure. A little over a month after Ms. Fields's disclosures, SAC Hawkins informed Ms. Fields that ADIC Davis had instructed SAC Hawkins to remove Ms. Fields's from her supervisory role as the Intelligence Coordinator from all three of her programs.

Initially, SAC Hawkins removed Ms. Fields from solely one program—Violent Incident Crimes-Domestic—so Ms. Fields's personnel assigned to the C-1 squad were no longer under her supervision, including those who were working on the Alhambra incident. SAC Hawkins told her that Ms. Fields was considered "a problem" by ADIC Davis and that this decision was based on Ms. Fields's and [REDACTED] disagreements.¹⁹ SAC Hawkins expressed frustration that the decision had been made without meaningful input from her, indicating that higher-level leadership

¹⁹ Justifying Ms. Fields's transfer citing her working relationship with [REDACTED] is additionally retaliatory. Ms. Fields had raised concerns for years about [REDACTED] treatment of intelligence personnel, their resistance to documentation requirements, and their opposition to standard intelligence oversight practices. During a prior performance review meeting in 2024, leadership acknowledged that her concerns about [REDACTED] had merit and she had received positive evaluations. Therefore, Ms. Fields viewed this justification, given shortly after her protected disclosures, as pretextual.

had already determined the outcome. Following SAC Hawkins's removal from her position as the Field Office's Intelligence Program SAC in mid-April 2025, Acting SAC Bob Molvar informed Ms. Fields that she would be removed from the rest of her programs. SAC Molvar told Ms. Fields that this decision was "not a personnel action," and also referenced the disagreements with [REDACTED].

Ms. Fields believes this reassignment constituted retaliation for her protected disclosures. No comparable action had been taken against her until after she objected to the protest-related investigations and reported those concerns outside her chain of command. With her squad removed and leadership refusing to support her, Ms. Fields recognized that she could no longer remain in her role and chose to resign.

III. CONCLUSION

The conduct described above had significant consequences for constitutional rights, and the integrity and effective operation of the FBI. First, the directives reported by Ms. Fields resulted in investigative activity being initiated based solely on individuals' exercise of First Amendment rights, including peaceful protest. In Ms. Fields's view, these actions were inconsistent with constitutional protections and FBI policies requiring an appropriate factual basis for investigative activity. More broadly, investigations perceived as targeting individuals solely for protected political activity risk undermining public confidence in the FBI and eroding trust that federal investigative powers will be exercised in a lawful, impartial, and constitutionally compliant manner.

Additionally, significant law enforcement resources were diverted from core public-safety missions. Intelligence analysts and investigative personnel were reassigned from ongoing matters involving drug trafficking, violent crime, cargo theft, and transnational organized crime to support protest-related inquiries that lacked a comparable threat basis. This diversion impaired the Los Angeles Field Office's ability to focus on critical public-safety and national-security priorities. The events also exposed failures in internal compliance and oversight mechanisms. Multiple personnel recognized that the proposed investigative activities raised serious constitutional and policy concerns, yet those concerns did not prevent the directives from moving forward.

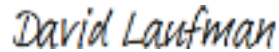
Leadership's handling of Ms. Fields's objections further created a chilling effect within the workforce. Employees, including Ms. Fields's own supervisor, expressed fear of challenging leadership directives, even when they believed those directives were unlawful or unconstitutional. Personnel repeatedly conveyed concerns that objecting to questionable actions could jeopardize their careers, resulting in reluctance to report misconduct or raise compliance concerns. The retaliation against Ms. Fields following her disclosures reinforced that chilling effect. It signaled to other employees that raising constitutional or legal concerns could carry professional consequences.

We ask that members of Congress and the leadership of the Office of Special Counsel and the DOJ Inspector General investigate thoroughly and without fear or favor the allegations of law and abuses of authority raised by Ms. Fields.

Respectfully submitted,



Jasmine Yunus
Dana L. Gold
Government Accountability Project
1612 K Street, NW, Suite 808
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 971-8861



David H. Laufman
Law Offices of David H. Laufman, PLLC
1250 Connecticut Ave., NW
Suite 700 PMB 5319
Washington, DC 20036

Attorneys for Ms. Fields

Cc:

Senator Chuck Grassley, Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Richard Durbin, Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Charles Baldis, Special Counsel, U.S. Office of Special Counsel
Don R. Berthiaume, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice