

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 30, 2025

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

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

We write to demand the Department of Justice (the Department or DOJ) withdraw its planned deployment of staff to monitor state-level, off-year elections due to the Department's blatantly partisan motivations.

Contrary to claims made by senior Department officials, this deployment of DOJ election observers is not consistent with usual practice. While the Department has previously used its authority to send election monitors to state-level, off-year elections, it is extremely rare.

We are further alarmed that this deployment is clearly linked to President Trump's continued perpetuation of lies relating to alleged fraud in our elections and his opposition to California's Proposition 50. Shortly after the DOJ's deployment announcement, the President falsely posted, without evidence: "[w]atch how totally dishonest the California Prop [v]ote is[.]" This statement, in the context of all his repeated election conspiracy theories, is a stain on this deployment and any actions that the Department might attempt to take based on it.

The Department has also publicly confirmed that these monitors are being deployed only to California and New Jersey at the request of Republican party officials in these states. DOJ has tried to justify this decision by the thinnest of grounds, such as two California counties' opposing unfettered access to protected voter data. This is also in contrast to numerous recent election monitoring efforts by DOJ which were not based on partisan affiliation. The last DOJ election monitor deployment in 2024 went to a wide range of states led by both Democrats and Republicans, as it did in 2022, 2016, 2014, and other prior years.

The DOJ's announcement also stated: "[t]his initiative is aimed at promoting transparency and an open flow of communication between *poll observers* and election monitors" (emphasis added). This unusual statement indicates DOJ election monitors are planning to coordinate with third party election observers, which could include partisan actors or others who have worked to undermine confidence in elections, such as Cleta Mitchell's Election Integrity Network. Given this Administration's willingness to

embrace individuals who attempted to overturn safe and secure elections, DOJ's announcement indicates its staff on the ground intend to act in concert with party officials or election deniers.

In addition, the President has repeatedly asserted inappropriate control over the traditionally independent administration of the Department's law enforcement powers to investigate and prosecute individuals. The Department's announcement included a statement from the former Acting US Attorney of the Central District of California, another significant departure from prior DOJ communications, but failed to affirm the Department's duty to be impartial and unbiased, especially in the context of elections. Since the President has been very clear about his motives and claims of power over the Department's day-to-day law enforcement activities, this deployment runs the very real risk of intimidating voters and turning the Department into a tool of partisan and frivolous election-related challenges.

In sum, the circumstances around the Department's planned deployment create a clear perception of a partisan motive and undermine the credibility of the Department to rely or act on the work of these observers. As a result, the deployment of Department staff to monitor upcoming elections in California should be canceled immediately.

At a minimum, the Department should provide greater transparency, coordinate with state and local election administrators, and ensure that its employees comply with federal and state law, Department policies, and ethical requirements to prevent any activities that may lead to voter intimidation or interference with elections.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator