

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 30, 2026

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Acting Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Acting Attorney General Blanche:

We urge you to reject any efforts by the Department of Justice (DOJ) to compensate January 6 rioters for their crimes and to commit to vigorously defending American taxpayers.

Previous letters to the Justice Department dated May 2, 2025, September 29, 2025, and January 15, 2026, made clear that payments to January 6 rioters would flout federal law and be an insult to the American public. The Department failed to respond to Congress, and instead, on May 18, 2026, announced that it had settled an unrelated IRS lawsuit with President Trump to create a \$1.8 billion slush fund to compensate alleged victims of DOJ “weaponization,” including his allies and January 6 insurrectionists. That settlement has been enjoined by one federal judge and is now being reviewed by another federal judge to determine whether it was fraudulent. You and the Department have disavowed the slush fund after bipartisan backlash to this brazen attempt to raid taxpayer funds on behalf of January 6 rioters, including those convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers during the attack.

Despite your testimony at a June 2 House Appropriations subcommittee hearing and DOJ’s filings in court, there is still uncertainty about whether the Department will pursue alternative ways to compensate convicted January 6 rioters. President Trump continues to make public comments in support of rewarding these convicted criminals, calling the slush fund “a great idea,” and the Department has not withdrawn the memorandum establishing it.¹ While you testified before Congress that the slush fund is not moving forward, you and other Department officials have refused to disavow the fund in writing or under oath.² It has also been publicly reported that Justice Department officials are privately assuring potential beneficiaries that these payouts will still occur.³

Although a federal judge has enjoined the slush fund, there are other plans to undermine the American justice system to pay out January 6 rioters, including those convicted of assaulting law enforcement officers. According to reporting, approximately 600 January 6 rioters have filed

¹ Gary Grumbach et al., *Federal judge indefinitely blocks Trump’s ‘anti-weaponization’ fund*, NBC NEWS (June 12, 2026), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/judge-indefinitely-blocks-trumps-anti-weaponization-fund-rcna349814>.

² Melissa Quinn, *DOJ rebuffs judge’s demand to state “anti-weaponization” fund is officially dead*, CBS NEWS (June 19, 2026), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/anti-weaponization-fund-justice-department-judge-declaration-blanche-bessent/>.

³ Sarah Fitzpatrick *Trump Isn’t Giving Up on His Slush Fund*, THE ATLANTIC (June 11, 2026), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/2026/06/trump-anti-weaponization-fund/687500/>.

claims under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA), expecting to receive millions of dollars in compensation for alleged injuries they sustained because they were prosecuted for crimes they committed during the attack on the Capitol.⁴ Tellingly, one lawyer representing January 6 rioters expressed concern that the \$1.8 billion slush fund would result in smaller per-person settlements than settling his clients' FTCA claims out of the Judgment Fund.⁵ Another group of plaintiffs bringing FTCA claims, including a member of the Proud Boys who was charged with assault, has filed a class action in federal court, seeking more than \$18 million.⁶

While most of these claims are barred by the FTCA's two-year statute of limitations, there is no evidence that the Justice Department has asserted this defense and rejected the claims.⁷ Even more concerning, in a now-deleted social media post, Associate Attorney General Stanley Woodward encouraged this end-run approach to get payouts, posting "We're on it."⁸ Other rioters are suing the federal government on other grounds, hoping to be rewarded for their actions during the violent January 6 attack. This includes five leaders of the Proud Boys organization, many of whom were convicted for violent crimes and plotting to overturn the results of the 2020 election on January 6, who have sued for \$100 million.⁹

We request responses to the following questions, which were previously sent to then-Attorney General Bondi on January 15, 2026, and have received no response:

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?

⁴ Rebecca Beitsch, *DOJ has other routes to payouts beyond Trump 'anti-weaponization' fund*, THE HILL (June 7, 2026), <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5912674-justice-department-settlements-ftca/>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Kyle Cheney, *Members of Jan. 6 mob sue police who fended off Capitol attack*, POLITICO (Mar. 30, 2026), https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/30/jan-6-lawsuit-capitol-police-00850890?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQMMzUwNjg1NTMxNzI4AAEeoXxFcKbWBxXiZOIU-bTL7ZfUB1pDhLHFTzNRh1xUuEwdmszFzLIUIN9MWLE_aem_TGxSIAS8cTfCjzVCziJN7A.

⁷ Jeremy Roebuck et al., *Trump's \$1.8 billion fund may be dead, but there are still paths to payouts*, WASH. POST (June 3, 2026), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2026/06/03/trumps-18-billion-fund-may-be-dead-there-are-still-paths-payouts/>.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Holmes Lybrand, *Proud Boys members suing Justice Department for January 6 prosecutions*, CNN (June 6, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/06/06/politics/proud-boys-justice-department-lawsuit-january-6>.

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?

The announcement of the \$1.8 billion slush fund was yet another blow to the American public's confidence in the Department of Justice. This Administration continues to send the message that January 6 insurrectionists, despite being convicted by juries of their peers, will be rewarded for their crimes at the expense of American taxpayers because they tried to overturn the outcome of an election in Donald Trump's favor.

The Department of Justice must end this corrupt money grab by publicly committing that it will not pursue any other such compensation fund and that it will vigorously defend taxpayers in any January 6-related lawsuits. We request a written response to this letter making these commitments and responding to our questions by no later than July 14, 2026.

Sincerely,



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



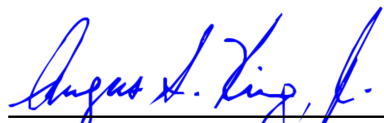
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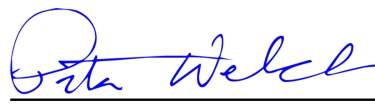
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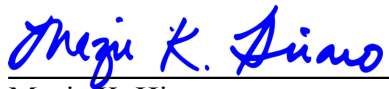
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