

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 29, 2025

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 reiterate our strong objections to any efforts by the Department of Justice to refund restitution payments to or financially reward convicted January 6 insurrectionists and implore you to forgo any such actions. Using taxpayer funds to refund January 6 insurrectionists would be an illegal and corrupt abuse of the justice system.

Our May 2, 2025 letter urged the Department of Justice to cease advancing arguments in court in support of refunding restitution payments made by convicted January 6 defendants, as it did on April 8, so that these individuals would be held responsible for the physical damage they caused to the Capitol. Over 120 days later, the Department has failed to respond to our letter or justify passing along to taxpayers the full cost of the damage caused during these insurrectionists' attempt to obstruct the peaceful transfer of power.

Recently, there have been shocking reports that Department officials are meeting with representatives of January 6 insurrectionists who are seeking cash rewards for their violent and illegal behavior. These criminals are apparently demanding taxpayer compensation, not only to refund court-ordered restitution to cover damages they caused to the Capitol building, but also to compensate them for having to face the legal consequences of their criminal acts.¹ While President Trump may have the authority to grant a blanket pardon to these insurrectionists, that miscarriage of justice does not give the Department the unilateral authority to refund or reward these criminals.

Multiple convicted January 6 insurrectionists have already asked courts to refund their previous restitution payments, and in all but one instance the courts have rejected the Justice Department's assertions and rightfully held that such refunds are unlawful.² Yet in an attempt to rewrite history and paint themselves as sympathetic victims, convicted January 6 insurrectionists are now going even further, urging the Justice Department to create a special panel, similar to that used to compensate September 11, 2001 victims, to award them money for the purported harms they suffered at the hands of the federal government. It is insulting for the Department to even

¹ Kyle Cheney, *Judge reluctantly authorizes refund of restitution paid by Jan. 6 rioter*, POLITICO (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/08/28/january-6-rioter-refund-00534475>; Alan Feuer, *Already Pardoned by Trump, Jan. 6 Rioters Push for Compensation*, NY Times (Aug. 31, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/31/us/politics/trump-jan-6-rioters-compensation.html>.

² See *United States v. Sullivan*, Crim. A. No. 21-78 (RCL), 2025 WL 1444392 (D.D.C. May 20, 2025); Mem. Op. & Order, *United States v. Vargas Santos*, Crim. A. No. 21-47 (RDM), 2025 WL 1786681 (D.D.C. June 27, 2025); Order, *United States v. Ballenger*, Crim. A. No. 21-719 (JEB), ECF No. 176 (D.D.C. June 30, 2025); Op. & Order, *United States v. Hager*, Crim. A. No. 21-381 (TSC), 2025 WL 1886135 (D.D.C. July 3, 2025).

entertain the idea of establishing a “victims” fund for those who violently stormed the U.S. Capitol, injured more than 100 law enforcement officers, and caused nearly \$3 million in property damages, which was left to the American taxpayers to cover.

Moreover, establishing a compensation fund for January 6 insurrectionists without congressional approval would violate federal law. Congress has provided no authorization or funding for such a misguided proposal, and we are confident that it will never do so.

Misusing taxpayer funds to financially reward those insurrectionists because they were prosecuted and convicted for their violent and destructive actions is unthinkable, and the Department should reject any such request. Instead, we seek a response to this letter by October 10, 2025 confirming that the Department has no plans to pursue further refunds or rewards for anyone who took part in the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Sincerely,



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



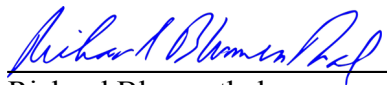
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on the Judiciary



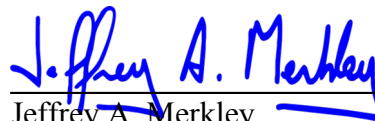
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