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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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June 13, 2024

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

I am deeply troubled with last weekend's incidents near the White House involving pro-terror, anti-Israel agitators. These individuals not only vandalized federal property with messages such as "Long live Hamas" and "Muslim 4 Hamas,"<sup>1</sup> but also assaulted U.S. Park Police (USPP) officers<sup>2</sup> and a National Park Service (NPS) ranger.<sup>3</sup> These overt criminal acts, committed on your watch, necessitate your unequivocal condemnation and decisive action to help bring these agitators to justice.

As the Secretary of the Interior, your support of the USPP and National Park Service is paramount to the security of our federal lands. The brazen assaults and subsequent vandalism are stark reminders of the vulnerabilities faced by law enforcement officers and rangers who serve and protect our national treasures. Your strong and immediate response is essential in affirming our national commitment to the rule of law and the safety of our federal personnel and properties.

Disturbingly, police reported no arrests following protesters' clear acts of violence and vandalism, leaving many questions unanswered about the adequacy of the response to this incident.<sup>4</sup> I question whether political sympathy with the agitators influenced your department's response to these acts of violence and vandalism. It is imperative that your department's actions are guided by the principles of law and order, rather than political considerations. The Department of the Interior must do everything within its authority to ensure that these offenders are brought to justice. The American people must have confidence that the Department will apply the law, regardless of the views of the lawbreakers.

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<sup>1</sup> [White House Protesters Vandalized Property and Clashed With Law Enforcement, But Police Say No Arrests Were Made \(freebeacon.com\)](https://www.freebeacon.com)

<sup>2</sup> [Anti-Israel agitators lay siege on Biden White House, trash Lafayette Square while forcing police out \(bizpacreview.com\)](https://bizpacreview.com)

<sup>3</sup>  [\(3\) Christian Julio Lasval on X: "After vandalizing the General Rochambeau Statue outside the North Front of the White House, a lone National Park Service Ranger stands alone, being accosted by the vandals in an attempt to prevent further vandalism. https://t.co/LL2WqZiSQN" / X \(twitter.com\)](https://twitter.com/ChristianJulioLasval)

<sup>4</sup> [White House Protesters Vandalized Property and Clashed With Law Enforcement, But Police Say No Arrests Were Made \(freebeacon.com\)](https://www.freebeacon.com)

Given the gravity of this situation, I expect immediate answers and actions regarding the following:

1. **Collaboration with Law Enforcement:** How is the Department coordinating with local and federal law enforcement agencies to identify, apprehend, and bring to justice the individuals responsible for the assaults on federal personnel and the vandalism of federal property?
2. **Support for USPP and NPS Rangers:** What concrete measures is the Department implementing to ensure the safety and well-being of USPP officers and NPS rangers who are at the forefront of protecting our national parks, federal lands, and monuments?
3. **Enhanced Security Measures:** What specific and immediate steps is the Department of the Interior taking to bolster security and surveillance on NPS lands to prevent such violent incidents in the future?
4. **Policy Revisions:** Is the Department planning to revise its policies or protocols to better manage and prevent violent demonstrations on federal lands in the future?

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

  
John Barrasso, M.D.  
Ranking Member