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September 13, 2024

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray  
Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation  
U.S. Department of Justice  
810 7th Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20531

Dear Director Wray,

I respectfully request a briefing to evaluate and understand the Federal Bureau of Investigation's efforts to monitor the current domestic threat environment ahead of the 2024 general election.

As Election Day on November 5<sup>th</sup> nears, we are all too aware of the events that took place before, during, and after the 2020 general election. Claims of mass voter fraud and a rigged election echoed through the internet especially within far-right online echo chambers. Through these forums, extremist groups such as the Proud Boys, the Oath Keepers, the Three Percenters, and other groups that are affiliated with white supremacist, neo-Nazi, and far-right antigovernment individuals carried out an attack on the United States Capitol with the goal of disrupting the certification of election results and overturning the 2020 Presidential election. These false claims were the fuel that motivated these groups to storm the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021.

I thank the Bureau for its ongoing efforts to prosecute the perpetrators of the January 6 attack. Since 2021, many of the individuals involved have been arrested and sentenced for the crimes committed that day. As the 2024 election nears, concerns are growing once again for potential unrest and violence. In June of this year, WIRED magazine published an article entitled "A January 6 Rioter Is Leading an Armed National Militia From Prison." The article names Edward "Jake" Lang – a rioter arrested for his actions on January 6<sup>th</sup> – in leading an effort to create a nationwide network of armed militias in all 50 states.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lang claims the network he created, called the North American Patriot and Liberty Militia (NAPALM), has 20,000 members in their Telegram group, though WIRED reports the true number is closer to 2,500. Concerningly, the group identifies itself as "a pro-gun organization," and is explicit about its preparations for potential "civil unrest" around the election.

1. <https://www.wired.com/story/january-6-rioter-leading-armed-national-militia-from-prison/>

We know that political tensions are often high during an election cycle, but to openly prepare for civil unrest, and the readiness to commit acts of violence is a warning we must take seriously. Many of the same people organizing these efforts and similar groups across the country were either direct participants or are connected to the election overturn efforts of 2020. Our law enforcement agencies must be thorough and clear-eyed in their assessments of and preparations for potential violence. I request a briefing on the Bureau's assessment of the potential threats posed by extremist militias, and insights into the following questions:

- What does the FBI currently know about the North American Patriot and Liberty Militia and other similar militia groups? Can the FBI identify and explain their motivations and goals?
- What are the relationships between these militia groups and any individuals who participated in, or planned, the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, storming of the United States Capitol? How many implicated individuals are currently awaiting trial? In prison? Have completed their sentence?
- What preventative measures are being taken to ensure we do not experience similar acts of violence on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025? What preventative measures are being taken to ensure we do not experience similar acts of violence in relation to the casting and counting of votes?
- How can we ensure that regardless of the results of the election, a peaceful transfer of power between the outgoing administration and incoming president is preserved?

I respectfully request a response within seven business days regarding plans to set up a briefing on this vital and time-sensitive issue. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN  
Member of Congress