

U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on the Judiciary

Washington, DC 20515–6216
One Hundred Sixteenth Congress

September 8, 2020

The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler:

Violent left-wing extremists are destroying Democrat-run American cities. As parts of these cities literally burn, prominent Democrat leaders look the other way on lawlessness and disorder. Even you, the chairman of the powerful Judiciary Committee with a unique platform to denounce left-wing violence, have trivialized it as “imaginary” and a “myth.” The Democrats’ acceptance and tacit encouragement of violence has real consequences. It is beyond time that you forcefully denounce left-wing violent extremism and convene a Committee hearing to examine the civic unrest plaguing Democrat-run cities.

Democrats have allowed cities to be overrun with violence and destruction. In Portland, Oregon, left-wing agitators set fire to a police station and tried to set fire to a federal courthouse.¹ In Seattle, Washington, left-wing activists created an autonomous zone—evicting the police and occupying a police station—allowing criminals to commit violent crimes.² In Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Kenosha, Wisconsin, rioters exploited peaceful protests to spread carnage and incite violence.³ In our nation’s capital, left-wing agitators staged a mock execution of the President and then harassed and threatened people leaving the White House.⁴ In New York City, a violent criminal brazenly tried to attack a woman on a Saturday morning in a busy Upper East Side subway station.⁵

¹ Gillian Flaccus, *Oregon protestors set fire to police precinct, tear gas used*, Assoc. Press (June 26, 2020); Conrad Wilson, *Police disperse protestors after fire set inside federal courthouse in Portland, Ore.* Pub. Broadcasting (July 3, 2020).

² Tim Stelloh & Assoc. Press, *Officials tell protestors to leave Seattle’s ‘autonomous zone,’* NBC News (June 22, 2020).

³ Jennifer Mayerle, *‘Crime is out of control’: Minneapolis officials address uptick in violence*, CBS Minnesota (July 31, 2020); Zachary Evans, *Most suspects arrested in Kenosha riots live outside city, according to police*, Nat’l Review (Aug. 31, 2020).

⁴ Thomas Catenacci, *DC protestors put Trump effigy under guillotine during White House RNC speech*, Daily Caller (Aug. 28, 2020).

⁵ *Suspect charged in ‘heinous’ attempted rape on subway platform in Manhattan*, ABC 7 News (Aug. 30, 2020).

Democrats have failed to stop the violence and destruction in these cities. Consistent with the Democrats' "defund the police" initiative, some Democrat-run major cities have reduced police budgets and local prosecutors have declined to enforce certain laws.⁶ Other prominent Democrats, like Senator Kamala Harris, have helped to raise bail money for criminals arrested in riots—money that was reportedly used to release an accused murderer, a convicted sex offender, and someone who shot at a police officer.⁷ When Attorney General William Barr urged the Committee to condemn mob violence and destruction of federal property at a recent hearing, not a single Democrat spoke up.⁸ Instead, you have minimized the violence in Democrat-run cities, calling the radical leftist group Antifa an "imaginary thing" and Antifa violence a "myth that's only being spread in Washington, D.C."⁹

President Donald Trump has sought to restore order to these cities, but Democrats have blocked his efforts and rejected his offers to provide federal assistance.¹⁰ Democrats only recently pivoted to take a tougher stance on the violence and looting, after polling showed—unsurprisingly—that the American people disapprove of violence in American cities.¹¹ However, employing their familiar blame-shifting tactics, Democrats now seek to blame President Trump for the violence and destruction caused by left-wing anarchists and extremists.

You have wasted the first twenty months of your chairmanship on fruitless partisan investigations in furtherance of your obsession with attacking President Trump. We urge you not to waste any more time. The jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee provides you with a unique authority to condemn the violence and disorder in Democrat-run cities. There are two specific actions that you can take now to help restore law and order to Democrat-run American cities:

1. Publicly and forcefully denounce left-wing violent extremism and acknowledge that left-wing violence is neither "imaginary" nor a "myth."
2. Immediately convene a hearing of the Judiciary Committee to examine the civil unrest caused by left-wing violent extremists in Democrat-run cities. This is an issue of life and death that the Committee must not ignore.

⁶ See, e.g., Ivan Pereira, *NYC cuts \$1B from police budget amid calls for reform*, ABC News (July 1, 2020); Joshua Rhett Miller, *Most charges against Portland protestors won't be prosecuted, DA says*, N.Y. Post (Aug. 12, 2020).

⁷ David Marcus, *Meet the rioting criminals Kamala Harris helped bail out of jail*, The Federalist (Aug. 31, 2020).

⁸ *Oversight of the Department of Justice: Hearing before the H. Comm. on the Judiciary*, 116th Cong. (2020) (question and answer with Rep. Debbie Lesko).

⁹ 166 Cong. Rec. H2423, H2457 (June 25, 2020) (statement of Rep. Jerrold Nadler); Yaron Steinbuch, *Rep. Jerry Nadler calls violence from Antifa in Portland a 'myth'*, N.Y. Post (July 27, 2020).

¹⁰ See, e.g., Anthony Leonardi, *'Stay away': Portland mayor denies Trump offer of federal aid to prevent violent protests*, Wash. Exam. (Aug. 28, 2020); Elizabeth Vaughn, *Chicago mayor denies Trump's help while 15 are shot near funeral home*, The Federalist (July 23, 2020).

¹¹ See, e.g., Jonathan Easley & Amie Parnes, *Democrats seek balance in backing protests, condemning violence*, The Hill (Aug. 29, 2020).

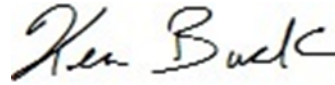
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We look forward to your prompt response on this important matter.

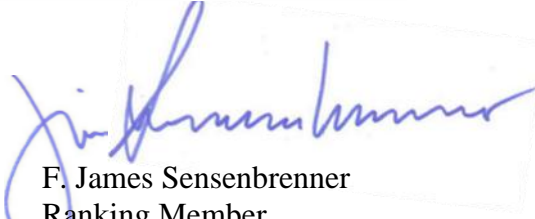
Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member



Ken Buck
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Immigration and
Citizenship



F. James Sensenbrenner
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Antitrust,
Commercial and Administrative Law



Mike Johnson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil
Rights and Civil Liberties

cc: The Honorable Zoe Lofgren, Chair, Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship

The Honorable David N. Cicilline, Chairman, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial,
and Administrative Law

The Honorable Steve Cohen, Chairman, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights
and Civil Liberties