

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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March 9, 2021

The Honorable Christopher Wray  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Director Wray:

The Subcommittee is writing to request a Member briefing on efforts by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to address the infiltration of law enforcement departments by white supremacists. Last year, during my ongoing investigation into this problem, the Bureau repeatedly told this Subcommittee that there was no evidence of a significant threat.

The Bureau also rejected my invitation to testify at a hearing on the matter and effectively disavowed the warnings of an earlier FBI threat assessment, which had asserted that infiltration by white supremacists can “lead to investigative breaches and can jeopardize the safety of law enforcement sources and personnel.”<sup>1</sup> This assessment further warned that infiltration could give white supremacists increased access to “restricted areas vulnerable to sabotage and to elected officials or protected persons, whom they could see as potential targets for violence.”<sup>2</sup>

As the world now knows, on January 6, 2021, irrefutable proof of this threat materialized on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, when off-duty law enforcement officers participated in the violent insurrection against Congress.<sup>3</sup> Given the FBI’s refusal just last year to admit that extremist police officers posed a serious threat to our Nation’s security, I am now concerned that the Bureau lacks an adequate strategy to respond to this clear and present danger to public safety.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *White Supremacist Infiltration of Law Enforcement* (Oct. 17, 2006) (online at [https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/White\\_Supremacist\\_Infiltration\\_of\\_Law\\_Enforcement.pdf](https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/White_Supremacist_Infiltration_of_Law_Enforcement.pdf)).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *After Capitol Riot, Police Chiefs Work to Root Out Officers with Ties to Extremist Groups*, Washington Post (Jan. 24, 2021) (online at [www.washingtonpost.com/politics/police-capitol-riot-extremists/2021/01/24/16fdb2bc-5a7b-11eb-b8bd-ee36b1cd18bf\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/police-capitol-riot-extremists/2021/01/24/16fdb2bc-5a7b-11eb-b8bd-ee36b1cd18bf_story.html)).

## **Off-Duty and Retired Law Enforcement Agents Participated in the Insurrection**

Police officers from law enforcement departments across the country are facing discipline, expulsion, and criminal charges because of their role in the insurrection on January 6.<sup>4</sup> At least 18 current and former police officers, firefighters, and military servicemembers have already been charged for their actions during the riot. In some cases, law enforcement chiefs have reported their own officers to federal law enforcement after officers posted about their criminal activities.<sup>5</sup> Since investigations are ongoing, we may not know for months the full extent of law enforcement personnel involvement in the insurrection.

On March 2, 2021, you told the Senate Judiciary Committee that the insurrection was an act of “domestic terrorism” and singled out the involvement of far-right and white supremacist extremists in the attack.<sup>6</sup>

The conclusion seems inescapable that the federal government has already charged multiple off-duty law enforcement agents for participating in an act of domestic terrorism. The Bureau must have a comprehensive strategy to assess this threat.

## **FBI Denied the Significance of the Threat to the Subcommittee Last Year**

Last year, the Subcommittee held a hearing with law enforcement personnel and national security experts to examine the infiltration of law enforcement departments by white supremacists.<sup>7</sup> I invited the FBI to testify at that hearing, but the Bureau refused to participate. The Bureau instead told Subcommittee staff that it did not believe that this threat was supported by evidence and that there would not be any utility in the Bureau offering testimony.

In a briefing with staff, the FBI again claimed that the infiltration of law enforcement departments by white supremacists was not a substantiated threat. Publicly available evidence,

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<sup>4</sup> *Off-Duty Police Officers Investigated, Charged with Participating in Capitol Riot*, National Public Radio (Jan. 15, 2021) (online at [www.npr.org/2021/01/15/956896923/police-officers-across-nation-face-federal-charges-for-involvement-in-capitol-ri](http://www.npr.org/2021/01/15/956896923/police-officers-across-nation-face-federal-charges-for-involvement-in-capitol-ri)).

<sup>5</sup> *Military and Police Investigate Members Charged in Capitol Riot*, Wall Street Journal (Jan. 23, 2021) (online at [www.wsj.com/articles/military-and-police-investigate-members-charged-in-capitol-riot-11611397800](http://www.wsj.com/articles/military-and-police-investigate-members-charged-in-capitol-riot-11611397800)); *Capitol Rioters Included Highly Trained Ex-Military and Cops*, Associated Press (Jan. 15, 2021) (online at <https://apnews.com/article/ex-military-cops-us-capitol-riot-a1cb17201dfddc98291e5badc257>).

<sup>6</sup> *Wray Stresses Role of Right-Wing Extremism in Hearing About Jan. 6 Riot*, National Public Radio (Mar. 2, 2021) (online at [www.npr.org/2021/03/02/972539274/fbi-director-wray-testifies-before-congress-for-1st-time-since-capitol-attack](http://www.npr.org/2021/03/02/972539274/fbi-director-wray-testifies-before-congress-for-1st-time-since-capitol-attack)).

<sup>7</sup> Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Hearing on Confronting Violent White Supremacy (Part IV): White Supremacy in Blue—The Infiltration of Local Police Departments*, 116th Cong. (Sept. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/legislation/hearings/confronting-violent-white-supremacy-part-iv-white-supremacy-in-blue-the>); Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Press Release: Subcommittee Seeks Documents in Investigation of White Supremacists Infiltrating Law Enforcement Agencies* (Sept. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/news/press-releases/subcommittee-seeks-documents-in-investigation-of-white-supremacists-infiltrating>).

including an internal FBI threat assessment from 2006, flatly contradicted this claim. When staff confronted the Bureau about the contradiction, the FBI all but discredited its own assessment.<sup>8</sup>

The shocking participation of law enforcement personnel in the January 6 domestic terrorist attack against Congress and our Capitol Police means that the Bureau must level with the American public about the steps it is taking to combat the infiltration of law enforcement departments by white supremacists.

This week, ABC News reported on a February 2021 threat assessment from the Bureau's San Antonio field office that provided further proof that the FBI's prior statements to the Subcommittee are deeply at odds with its own analysis.<sup>9</sup>

The assessment concluded that white supremacists and other far-right extremists would "very likely seek military and law enforcement affiliation in furtherance of" their goals, and that, as a result, extremists could "gain access to non-public tradecraft and information, enabling them to enhance operational security and develop new tactics."<sup>10</sup>

This conclusion is consistent with the FBI's 2006 threat assessment, which expressed concern about the "historical" interest among white supremacist groups in access to law enforcement agencies and "self-initiated efforts by individuals, particularly among those already within law enforcement ranks, to volunteer their professional resources to white supremacist causes."<sup>11</sup>

I am deeply concerned that the Bureau dismissed this threat last year and instead characterized the threat of white supremacist infiltration of law enforcement as a hypothetical problem that has not materialized. For the above reasons, I am requesting a Member briefing on this topic no later than March 26, 2021.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

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<sup>8</sup> Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Press Release: Subcommittee Chairman Raskin Releases FBI Document on White Supremacists in Law Enforcement* (Sept. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/news/press-releases/subcommittee-chairman-raskin-releases-fbi-document-on-white-supremacists-in-law>).

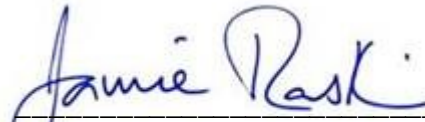
<sup>9</sup> *White Supremacists "Seek Affiliation" with Law Enforcement to Further Goals, Internal FBI Report Warns*, ABC News (Mar. 8, 2021) (online at <https://abcnews.go.com/US/white-supremacists-seek-affiliation-law-enforcement-goals-internal/story?id=76309051>).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *White Supremacist Infiltration of Law Enforcement* (Oct. 17, 2006) (online at [https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/White\\_Supremacist\\_Infiltration\\_of\\_Law\\_Enforcement.pdf](https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/White_Supremacist_Infiltration_of_Law_Enforcement.pdf)).

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



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Jamie Raskin  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

cc: The Honorable Pete Sessions, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties