



Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House

June 4, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Across the nation, Americans are peacefully protesting to demand an end to the pattern of racial injustice and police brutality that has killed so many innocent Americans, as we saw most recently in the murder of George Floyd.

It is alarming that here in our nation's capital, the thousands who have turned out peacefully have been confronted with the deployment of various security officers from multiple jurisdictions, including unidentified federal law enforcement personnel.

We have seen soldiers on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. We have witnessed Bureau of Prisons officers in Lafayette Square. We have seen National Park Service officers hassling peaceful protestors. Several states have deployed members of their National Guard to D.C. This is in addition to the FBI and other security forces operating in our nation's capital.

We are concerned about the increased militarization and lack of clarity that may increase chaos. I am writing to request a full list of the agencies involved and clarifications of the roles and responsibilities of the troops and federal law enforcement resources operating in the city. Congress and the American people need to know who is in charge, what is the chain of command, what is the mission, and by what authority is the National Guard from other states operating in the capital.

To make matters worse, some officers have refused to provide identification and have been deployed without identifying insignias, badges and name plates. The practice of officers operating with full anonymity undermines accountability, ignites government distrust and suspicion, and is counter to the principle of procedural justice and legitimacy during this precarious moment in our nation's history.

The Department of Justice itself in the past has stated that allowing officers to work anonymously creates "mistrust and undermines accountability" and "conveys a message to community members that, through anonymity, officers may seek to act with impunity." In recent days, many former high-level DOJ officials have echoed these concerns and warned that allowing federal law enforcement officers to operate without identification can fatally weaken oversight efforts and fails to send the message that abuse will not be tolerated.

As peaceful people all over the country turn out to honor the memory of George Floyd and protest for change, we must ensure that their safety and their constitutional rights are being respected.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,


NANCY PELOSI
Speaker of the House