



June 8, 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:

We call on you to immediately reopen Lafayette Square to the public, a place which has long been a venue where Americans can gather to freely exercise their constitutional rights in close proximity to the White House.

On June 1, 2020, you were responsible for ordering federal officers to force peaceful protestors from the Square using tear gas and other violent means, in clear violation of the protestors' First Amendment rights of free of speech and assembly. This deeply offensive action was taken in service of the regrettable political stunt you staged at St. John's Church that evening.

You have now erected heavy, semi-permanent steel fencing to wall off the Square. Your conversion of this unique public park in the heart of our Nation's capital to what looks like a militarized zone denies citizens access to the park and sends the worst possible message to the American public and people around the world. Lafayette Square should be a symbol of freedom and openness, not a place behind which the leader of our Executive Branch cowers in fear of protesters who are crying out for justice.

It is not sufficient for your Administration to claim that security needs somehow require the closing of Lafayette Square. The secure perimeter of the White House was expanded dramatically in 1995 with the closure of sections of Pennsylvania Avenue and E Street, NW. Those measures have for a quarter of a century been adequate to protect the White House complex from terrorism and all manner of other threats. It is simply not credible to claim that the current protests justify the oppressive walls you have erected in response.

We therefore urge you to tear down these walls, reopen Lafayette Square, and allow the public to gather there for you and all the world to hear their voices.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter of importance to our democracy.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Nancy Pelosi in blue ink.

NANCY PELOSI
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

Handwritten signature of Charles E. Schumer in blue ink.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate