

# United States Senate

COMMITTEES:  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
FINANCE  
JUDICIARY  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

January 3, 2025

The Honorable Christopher Wray  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington, D.C., 20520

Dear Director Wray:

I write to express my deep concern regarding the terror attack that occurred in New Orleans on January 1. In the early hours of New Year's Day, an individual plowed a pickup truck into a crowd of people on Bourbon Street in New Orleans, Louisiana, killing 14 innocent people and injuring dozens more. Among the injured are two heroic police officers who traded gunfire with the suspect, who is now deceased. While the facts surrounding this unconscionable attack continue to emerge, what we know is deeply troubling: the suspect was in possession of weapons, improvised explosive devices, and an ISIS flag. This horrific incident constitutes a blatant act of terror on the American homeland, and the people of our country deserve to know whether federal law enforcement agencies can sufficiently prevent and respond to such incidents.

To that end, I am deeply concerned that—under your leadership—the Bureau has prioritized Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives over its core mission of protecting the American people. A recent report, drafted by a group of retired FBI agents for the House Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government, indicates that “the law enforcement and intelligence capabilities of the FBI are degrading because the FBI is no longer hiring ‘the best and the brightest’ candidates.”<sup>1</sup> The report also notes that “the FBI is selecting [lower quality] candidates to become FBI Special Agents because they satisfy the FBI’s priority to meet Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) mandates.”<sup>2</sup>

In line with President Biden’s extreme focus on DEI measures, you announced in early 2021 the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer at the FBI.<sup>3</sup> The New Orleans FBI Field Office subsequently held a “Diversity Agent Recruiting Event” on July 17, 2024—only a few months before this horrific terror attack on the city.<sup>4</sup> And the New Orleans Chief of Police, Anne Kirkpatrick, is an instructor for the Bureau’s Leadership Training Program, where she teaches a course on “bias and diversity.”<sup>5</sup> Most recently, in a striking example of tone deafness, the New Orleans FBI Field office thought it important to brag on X about how many bracelets its agents had collected. Your decision to prioritize politics, pop culture, or almost anything else over your mission to protect the

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<sup>1</sup> Report on Alarming Trends in FBI Special Agent Recruitment and Selection, (Oct. 2023)  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/701275030/Report-on-FBI-Special-Agent-Recruitment-and-Selection>.

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

<sup>3</sup> Stephanie Pagones, *FBI Director Wray Appoints Agency’s First-Ever Chief Diversity Officer*, FOX NEWS (April 21, 2021, 2:33 PM), <https://www.foxnews.com/us/fbi-first-chief-diversity-officer-scott-mcmillion>.

<sup>4</sup> Press Release, *FBI New Orleans Seeking Diverse Special Agent Candidates*, (May 20, 2024)  
<https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/neworleans/news/fbi-new-orleans-seeking-diverse-special-agent-candidates>.

<sup>5</sup> *Superintendent of Police Ann Kirkpatrick*, <https://nola.gov/nopd/about-us/superintendent-of-police/>.

public has put Americans in harm's way, and the January 1 terror attack was the inevitable consequence.

Put simply, your focus on woke DEI initiatives at the FBI has endangered our national security and the lives of all Americans. Americans now feel increasingly unsafe because of incidents like the January 1 terror attack, and the FBI's prioritization of diversity over competence shows that their concerns are well founded. Fortunately, the American people have spoken, and President Trump will soon bring law and order back to our nation.

In the meantime, until the President-Elect's nominee to lead the FBI is confirmed, the American people deserve to know the full extent to which your radical DEI agenda has compromised our national security. To that end, please respond to the following questions by **January 10, 2025**:

1. How many FBI employees have been hired based on the Bureau's DEI initiatives that you have instituted?
2. How are such DEI initiatives funded? Have any funds from the Bureau's budget been reallocated to fund these initiatives?
3. How many FBI agents were hired as a result of the July 17, 2024 "Diversity Agent Recruiting Event" in New Orleans? In answering this question, please specify the total number of agents hired and to which Agency components they were assigned.
4. Has the Bureau recently terminated the employment of any FBI agents who assist the FBI's National Security Branch counterterrorism and intelligence components?
5. In the online posting about the July 17 event, FBI New Orleans Special Agent in Charge Lyonel Myrthil is quoted as stating that "the diversity of our staff is the most valuable resource we have in . . . keeping Americans safe."<sup>6</sup> Do you agree with that statement?

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Marsha Blackburn  
United States Senator

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<sup>6</sup> Press Release, *FBI New Orleans Seeking Diverse Special Agent Candidates*, (May 20, 2024) <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/neworleans/news/fbi-new-orleans-seeking-diverse-special-agent-candidates>.