

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 23, 2025

Director Kash Patel
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington DC 20535

Dear Director Patel:

I am writing to express serious concern about the diversion of counterterrorism and counterintelligence resources within the Department of Justice (DOJ) to support immigration enforcement operations. Over the last year, senior officials have reassigned personnel and assets from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) core national security mission to immigration enforcement, leaving counterterrorism and counterintelligence work compromised and putting our national security at risk. Provided that the FBI assesses that terrorists "continue to pose of the greatest, most immediate threats to the homeland" and "counterintelligence operations against nation-state adversaries mitigate grievous risk to U.S. national security," I urge you to ensure proper resources are provided toward counterterrorism and counterintelligence efforts to ensure the safety of the American people.

In January 2025, *Politico* reported that one of the first actions of the Trump Administration's DOJ was for Acting Attorney General Emil Bove to authorize the temporary deployment of FBI's counterterrorism personnel to assist Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). A DOJ wide memo dated January 21, 2025 directed all the "FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces...to coordinate with [the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)] ... to assist in the execution of President Trump's immigration related initiatives."¹ Agents responsible for espionage detection cyber threat monitoring, and terrorism investigation, therefore, were required to prioritize immigration enforcement, giving less attention to crucial national security threats.² According to *NBC News*, FBI employees have been spending "significant amounts of time" assisting DHS.³

This shifting of resources has direct consequences on our national security. According to *ABC News*, there were five alleged attacks of terror across the United States in the first half of 2025.⁴ Although some investigators were returned to counterterrorism efforts at the FBI, *The Washington Post* found in October 2025 that nearly a quarter of the FBI's roughly 13,000 agents nationwide, and up to 40 percent in the largest field offices, remain assigned to immigration enforcement duties.⁵ This demonstrates that, even after several incidents, national security personnel continue to be diverted at a dramatic scale away from counterterrorism priorities.

¹ Gerstein, Josh, and Dasha Burns. "Trump DOJ Gears Up for Immigration Enforcement." *Politico*, 22 Jan. 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/01/22/donald-trump-justice-department-immigration-005783>.

² Dilanian, Ken. "FBI Returning Agents to Counterterrorism Work After Diverting Them to Immigration." *NBC News*, 14 June 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/fbi-returning-agents-counter-terrorism-work-diverting-immigration-rcna21366>

³ Id.

⁴ Mallin, Alexander, and Josh Margolin. "Amid Recent String of Attacks Inspired by Israel-Hamas War, Some Experts Worry Counterterrorism Not a Priority." *ABC News*, 26 June 2025, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/amid-recent-string-attacks-inspired-israel-hamas-war/story?id=122481895>

⁵ Nakashima, Ellen, and Devlin Barrett. "A Quarter of FBI Agents Are Assigned to Immigration Enforcement, per FBI Data." *The Washington Post*, 8 Oct. 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/10/08/fbi-agents-reassigned-immigration/>

In November 2025, *The New York Times* reported that analysts who specialize in tracking terrorist financing and money laundering, as well as agents investigating the illicit trade in looted antiquities, a major revenue source for terrorist networks, were still reassigned to immigration duties. Internal sources further indicate that these core national security investigations, including into the black market for Iranian oil sold to finance terrorism, have been delayed by months.⁶

A November report from former and current FBI employees further details that the shift of resources from counterterrorism and counterintelligence teams—including “many FBI personnel working years-long complex investigations involving classified techniques and sources”—“have caused several critical investigations to stop.”⁷ Delays in this critical investigative work risk making our country more vulnerable to terrorist threats.

In addition, reporting from *The Bulwark* in December 2025 indicates that FBI and DOJ personnel, including specialists with expertise on China, Russia, and Iran, have been regularly assigned to assist with immigration enforcement.⁸ Former agents noted that counterintelligence specialists with deep expertise in these countries are now working immigration cases on a rotating basis. These shifts, according to the reporting, have limited investigations into violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) and have allowed foreign intelligence operatives “greater room to maneuver” within the United States.⁹

The reallocation of FBI personnel represents a departure from the Bureau’s core statutory mission. Especially since the September 11, 2001, attacks, the Bureau has been tasked with preventing terrorism, countering espionage, and protecting the United States against foreign intelligence threats. Its counterintelligence and counterterrorism components exist to detect and disrupt the activities of hostile foreign actors, not to conduct civil immigration enforcement or unrelated administrative duties. History has shown that when the FBI diverts its focus from these essential missions, adversaries exploit the gaps, forcing the Bureau to spend years rebuilding lost capabilities. To repeat those mistakes now, at a time of escalating global espionage and terrorism threats, would place our national security at unacceptable risk.

Given these circumstances, I ask you promptly answer the following questions:

1. To what extent have FBI personnel assigned to counterintelligence, counterterrorism, or related national security missions been redirected to assist with immigration enforcement or other non-national security duties?
2. How have these reassignments affected FBI’s ability to investigate and disrupt espionage, terrorism, cyber intrusions, and other national security threats?
3. Have any ongoing national security or counterterrorism investigations—such as the probe into the Iranian oil black market or cases involving foreign influence operations—been delayed, suspended, or deprioritized because of these diversions?
4. Were formal operational risk assessments or impact analyses conducted prior to redirecting these agents, and if so, what did they conclude?

⁶ Miroff, Nick. “Homeland Security Missions Falter Amid Focus on Deportations.” *The New York Times*, 16 Nov. 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/16/us/politics/dhs-agents-reassigned.html>

⁷ Nelson, Caleb. “Damning Report Labels FBI ‘Rudderless Ship’ Under Kash Patel — with Him and Dan Bongino More Concerned with Building ‘Personal Résumés.’” *New York Post*, 30 Nov. 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/11/30/opinion/damning-report-labels-fbi-rudderless-ship-under-kash-patel-with-he-and-dan-bongino-more-concerned-with-building-personal-resumes/>

⁸ Schindler, John R. “The FBI Spent a Generation Relearning How to Catch Spies. Then Came Kash Patel.” *The Bulwark*, 3 Dec. 2025, <https://www.thebulwark.com/p/fbi-spent-generation-relearning-catch-spies-kash-patel-counter-intelligence-espionage-tulsi-gabbard-china>

⁹ Id

5. What steps, if any, has the Bureau taken to return these personnel to their original counterintelligence and counterterrorism assignments and to restore full operational readiness in these mission areas?
6. What mechanisms or internal controls will be implemented to prevent future diversions of national security resources for purposes unrelated to the FBI's statutory counterintelligence and counterterrorism missions?

Protecting the United States from terrorism and espionage must remain our foremost priority. I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress