

Joint Statement on January 6, 2021 Attack on the Capitol

On Wednesday, January 6th, armed insurrectionists stormed the halls of our nation's Capitol to violently disrupt our democratic process and the peaceful transition of power. For the first time in American history, the Confederate flag – a symbol of our nation's darkest chapter and most shameful atrocities – flew within the Capitol. For the first time in American history, the sitting president incited a mob to defy the results of a fair and free election in an attempted coup.

As Americans, we are deeply angered by this unprecedented assault on our Republic. And as elected chief prosecutors, we say **enough**. We call upon President Trump and all other elected leaders to denounce these attacks and those who participated in them in no uncertain terms, to cease perpetuating mistruths that are fanning distrust and division in our nation, and to accept the results of the 2020 election.

For the last four years, our duty to protect our communities and uphold the legitimacy of our office has been made increasingly more difficult in the face of attacks on the rule of law and our democratic institutions from the highest leaders in the country. President Trump and his supporters have repeatedly incited violence and perpetuated conspiracy theories with devastating consequences. Public trust is at the heart of public safety, yet trust in government and our legal system has plummeted in the last four years. Words matter. And false narratives of a stolen election and efforts to disenfranchise countless Americans by ignoring their votes are attacks on our democracy and law and order, threatening the very wellbeing of our country.

The tragic events of January 6th make clear: no leader who incites violence and undermines faith in our democracy and our election process deserves to lead. And these brazen acts in defiance of American law and values cannot go without consequences. Five more lives have been lost and many have been injured and further traumatized at a time of already deep suffering in this nation. We demand accountability.

We are committed to preserving First Amendment rights, but as law enforcement leaders, we know that those rights do not include fomenting violence, interfering with fair elections, or rioting and looting in the halls of the heart of government. We must hold accountable all those who were responsible for Wednesday's events, including anyone who incited and participated in the violence and all who failed to be prepared and appropriately respond to it.

As leaders committed to equal justice for all, we also feel compelled to call out the profound inequity on display on Wednesday. During overwhelmingly peaceful protests for racial equity this past year, law enforcement across the United States all too often responded with violence, aggressive and militarized use of force, and mass arrests. Yet when predominantly white armed insurgents attacked our nation's halls of governance on January 6th, looting and destroying federal property, many in law enforcement appeared to stand aside. This profound and racist double standard makes clear the depth of inequity in our nation's policing practices, the need for

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broader systemic transformation, and the necessity of a thorough inquiry into Wednesday's law enforcement response.

These ongoing failures of federal leadership of the highest order also make clear the need for change under the incoming administration. Among [many reforms](#), we call for a [truly independent Department of Justice](#) to restore the integrity of that body and our federal government. Our leaders must be above lying, deception, and inciting violence – and they must be held to account when those lines are crossed. These events make clear that our future as a nation is at stake.

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