



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE | OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

July 23, 2020

The Honorable Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senate

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Senator Merkley, Senator Wyden, Congresswoman Bonamici, and Congressman Blumenauer:

I am writing in response to your letter dated July 22, 2020, in which you requested that the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigate the involvement of DOJ law enforcement personnel in responding to ongoing protests in Portland, Oregon.

After assessing these issues, and in response your request and those from other Members of Congress and the public, the DOJ OIG is initiating a review to examine the DOJ's and its law enforcement components' roles and responsibilities in responding to protest activity and civil unrest in Portland, Oregon and Washington, D.C. over the prior two months. The review will include examining the training and instruction that was provided to the DOJ law enforcement personnel; compliance with applicable identification requirements, rules of engagement, and legal authorities; and adherence to DOJ policies regarding the use of less-lethal munitions, chemical agents, and other uses of force. With regard to events in Lafayette Square on June 1, 2020, the DOJ OIG will coordinate our review with the Department of Interior OIG, which recently announced its review of those events. If circumstances warrant, the OIG will consider including other issues that may arise during the course of the review.

Additionally, in response to your request, related Congressional requests, complaints received by the OIG, and a referral from the U.S. Attorney in Oregon, the DOJ OIG has opened an investigation into use of force allegations involving DOJ law enforcement personnel in Portland, Oregon in July 2020. The DOJ OIG will coordinate our investigation with the Department of Homeland Security OIG.

Thank you for your continued support of the OIG. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me or Adam Miles, Counselor to the Inspector General, at (202) 514-3435.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General