

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 2026

Hon. Todd Blanche, Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Hon. Kash Patel, FBI Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Attorney General Blanche and Director Patel:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the politically-motivated, ideology driven indictments against the Southern Poverty Law Center. On Tuesday, April 21, the Department of Justice sought and obtained an indictment against the Southern Poverty Law Center on 11 counts of wire and bank fraud. The indictment that the Department of Justice sought was a troubling escalation of the attacks on non-profits, educational institutions and law firms, an ever expanding enemies list.

The Department of Justice is weaponizing its powers to weaken the Southern Poverty Law Center and the entire infrastructure of civil rights advocacy. Your attack on the Southern Poverty Law Center began last year when the Department of Justice completely severed its relationship with the Southern Poverty Law Center, a relationship going back decades. Now, your indictment represents a dangerous departure from anti-white supremacist work that Department of Justice has pursued for decades and that Southern Poverty Law Center conducts to protect our communities.

This indictment not only impacts the efficacy and operation of the Southern Poverty Law Center; it also sends a chilling message to other civil rights organizations. As the Trump Administration continues to implement policies which limit and curtail the fundamental rights of Americans. The message is clear: if you stand up against your administration's civil rights abuses, then you will endanger your tax-exempt status, and come under legal fire.

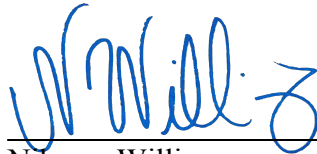
This indictment brings up many questions for Members of Congress and the civil rights advocacy infrastructure. Therefore, we are demanding a response to these questions and will be looking forward to asking these questions before the American people in a hearing under oath:

1. What is the history and practice of the FBI using paid informants in its investigations?
2. Which official from the Trump Administration ordered this investigation and pursuit of the subsequent indictment?
3. What data do you have to prove that the use of paid informants "manufactures the extremism" of the white supremacist groups the Southern Poverty Law Center was investigating?
4. Are there any other organizations on your list that you plan to indict for similar charges?
5. If so, which groups are under investigation for similar charges, and what evidence do you have to show that these organizations criminally misused funds?

The prosecution efforts of your Justice Department are troubling, sinister, and suspect. We condemn these efforts in the strongest possible terms and will not allow the Department of Justice to dismantle civil rights organizations while simultaneously abdicating your civil rights responsibilities.

We look forward to your prompt response to these questions.

Sincerely,



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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



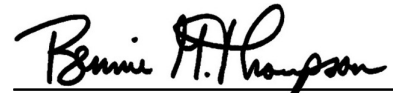
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Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



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Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



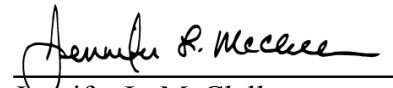
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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



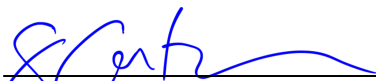
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Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



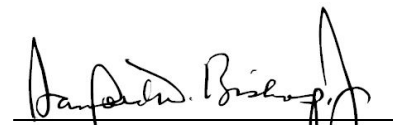
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Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



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Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



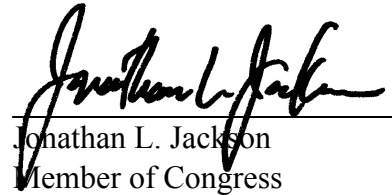
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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



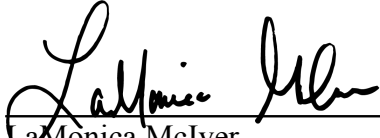
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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



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Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



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LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



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André Carson  
Member of Congress



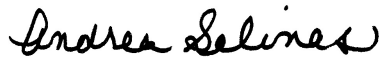
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Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress



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Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



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Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress