



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

DEMOCRATS | RANKING MEMBER JAMIE RASKIN

Trump's Unprecedented Purge at the Department of Justice Threatens Public Safety, National Security, and the Rule of Law

The Trump Administration has launched an unprecedented and all-out purge at the Department of Justice (DOJ) by firing, demoting, and removing career employees, including the most experienced investigators and senior prosecutors charged with enforcing federal law. In the first ten days of trying to gut America's premiere law enforcement agency, the Trump Administration has:

- **Summarily removed top career officials from key positions** at DOJ's National Security, Criminal, Civil Rights, and Environment and Natural Resources Divisions. Significantly, the longtime career head of the Department's Public Integrity Section—which enforces all public anti-corruption laws and ensures the integrity of our elections—was also removed in this purge. These arbitrary removals and reassignments of top officials will hinder, if not cripple, DOJ's ability to respond to national security, criminal, civil rights, and public corruption violations.
- **Fired without cause more than a dozen civil servant career prosecutors who previously worked on Special Counsel Jack Smith's team.** The Acting Attorney General told them: "I do not believe that the leadership of the department can trust you to assist in implementing the president's agenda faithfully." This statement indicates that these civil servants were illegally fired for failing to pass the Administration's new presidential political loyalty test. Federal civil service laws forbid partisan discrimination and political retribution. They also clearly prevent retaliation against Justice Department prosecutors for the crime of doing their jobs as assigned.
- **Installed inexperienced and unqualified Trump loyalists to run the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).** The Administration demoted five Executive Assistant Directors who lead the FBI's National Security, Criminal, Cyber, Responses and Services, Science and Technology, Infotech, and HR branches. These changes will further jeopardize our national security, leaving the FBI with no experienced senior leadership and a partisan Trump loyalist heading up the Bureau's response to increasing security threats from Russia, China, and other authoritarian adversaries.
- **Appointed an election-denying criminal defense attorney for January 6 rioters as the Acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia.** In a move of absurd and terrifying political retribution, Acting U.S. Attorney Ed Martin has already launched a probe of his own office's prosecutors simply for their work to bring to justice the hundreds of violent criminals who stormed the Capitol and beat our police officers. Mr. Martin seems determined to follow the President's announced plan to use the DOJ to

exact retaliation against his perceived enemies, above all the professional career prosecutors in the DOJ who did their job and prosecuted members of the violent militias, street gangs, and freelance rioters who participated in the January 6 attack on the Capitol.

- **Demoted DOJ's senior-most career ethics official** who spearheaded the Department's efforts to keep its leaders in compliance with all ethics requirements and to keep politics out of their work. By effectively ousting the Department's ethics lead, the Trump Administration paves the path for political weaponization of the DOJ without any of the traditional ethical guardrails that have kept the Department out of partisan politics.
- **Removed multiple senior leaders of the Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) without cause and without notice.** The firing notice cited a hopelessly vague rationale for their removal, namely "Title II of the Constitution," which is a textual constitutional provision, not a substantive legal justification for removing civil service-protected career Department employees.
- **Fired all Democratic members of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board,** a bipartisan watchdog group created to protect Americans from illegal government surveillance. This move leaves the Board paralyzed as the Administration begins to reshape intelligence agencies. It strikes an immense blow against the privacy rights and civil liberties of the people.
- **In a transparent attempt to complete the political purge of the DOJ along with the rest of the federal work force, offered "deferred resignations" to untold thousands of Department employees to force a mass exodus of the experienced and nonpartisan civil servants being targeted.** Despite the promises dangled to pay employees through September 30 without having them work and despite efforts to characterize this effort as a "buyout", there are significant concerns about whether the Administration has the legal authority to make and honor such an extravagant and dubious offer, whose extremely vague terms generally mirror the "fork in the road" offer terms that Elon Musk extended to Twitter employees when he took over that company but remain wholly undependable.