

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

The American people deserve answers to a few straightforward questions regarding the security of the Capitol on January 6th.

- When then-Chief Sund made a request for national guard support on January 4<sup>th</sup>, why was that request denied?
- Did Sergeant at Arms Paul Irving get permission or instruction from your staff on January 4<sup>th</sup> prior to denying Chief Sund's request for the national guard?
- What conversations and what guidance did you and your staff give the Sergeant at Arms leading up to January 6<sup>th</sup> specific to the security posture of the campus?
- What conversations did you have during the attack on the Capitol and what response did you give security officials on January 6<sup>th</sup> when Chief Sund requested National Guard support that required your approval?
- Why are your House Officers refusing to comply with preservation and production requests to turn over request materials relevant to the events of January 6<sup>th</sup>?

Five weeks have passed since the January 6th attack on the Capitol building, and many important questions about your responsibility for the security of the Capitol remain unanswered. As you are aware, the Speaker of the House is not only the leader of the majority party, but also has enormous institutional responsibilities. The Speaker is responsible for all operational decisions made within the House. We have observed for two years this very heavy-handed and tightly controlled approach to House operations that has been exerted by yourself, your staff, and an army of appointed House officials.

In the wake of the attack, there were many calls from members, on both sides of the aisle, to conduct a full bipartisan and bicameral review. Republicans have introduced a bill to establish a structure for this review, identify failures and ensure the Capitol is never violently breached again. Instead of working together, you decided unilaterally to fire then-Sergeant at Arms (SAA) Paul Irving, demand the resignation of then-Chief of the Capitol Police (Chief) Steve Sund, and appointed retired General Russel Honoré to lead a security review. These decisions were made in a partisan manner without any consultation of House Republicans and therefore raise questions about the political motivations of your decisions.

It has been widely reported and confirmed by multiple sources that when Chief Sund requested the National Guard be activated ahead of the January 6th Joint Session of Congress, the response from the SAA, acting on your behalf, was that the “optics” of having the National Guard on-site were not good and the intelligence didn’t support the move. The request was not approved. Furthermore, on January 6<sup>th</sup> in the middle of the on-going attack of the Capitol, Chief Sund again notified the SAA of his request for approval to authorize the National Guard. It took over an hour for his request to be approved because the SAA had to run the request up the chain of command, which undoubtedly included you and your designees.

On January 7th, you held a press conference in which you stated, in part, that you were calling on Chief Sund to resign because he “hasn’t called us since this happened.” That claim is refuted by Chief Sund who in a letter to you, dated February 1st, 2021, detailed two occasions that he briefed you on the situation on the Capitol campus—the first occurring at 5:36 p.m. and the second at 6:25 p.m., both on January 6th.

While there is wide-spread support to conduct an independent security review of the campus, General Russel Honoré was appointed solely by you, without consultation of the minority. To the General’s credit he has reached out to several Republicans to brief on his work to date. We are hopeful his review will result in beneficial recommendations that are not influenced by political motivations. However, it is easy to understand why we and our Senate counterparts remain skeptical that any of his final recommendations will be independent and without influence from you.

In addition, we are very concerned by the obstruction and inability to procure and preserve information from your House Officers when requested. Such information is necessary to properly conduct oversight on the January 6th events. Preservation and production requests were sent to the SAA and the House Chief Administrative Officer, among other legislative agencies, requesting that such relevant information concerning the attack on the Capitol, including correspondence, video footage, audio recordings, and other records, be preserved and produced to the relevant committees. In multiple cases, your appointees, acting on your behalf, have denied requests to produce this information. The response we received was: *“We regret to inform you that given the scope of the information requested and the concerns implicated by the nature of the request... we are unable to comply with the request at this time.”* Even more troubling is despite your House Officers refusal to comply with the request we have recently learned that some of the same material we requested was provided to the House Judiciary Committee on a partisan basis. This is unacceptable. Madam Speaker, that direction could only have come from you.

Lastly, your hyperbolic focus on fabricated internal security concerns has taken critical resources away from the real threat, which is from outside the U.S. Capitol. Your decision to install magnetometers around the House Chamber is yet another example of this misdirection and misappropriation of House resources, which could be better used to protect members, staff, and official visitors from real, confirmed threats. Tellingly, Madam Speaker, you have failed to

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comply with this requirement yourself. End this political charade, and work with us to protect the Capitol and those who work here every day.

Sincerely,



Rodney Davis  
Ranking Member  
Committee on  
House Administration



Jim Jordan  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary



James Comer  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight  
and Reform



Devin Nunes  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Select Committee  
on Intelligence