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10TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

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

October 7, 2021

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
United States Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

Over the past several months, we have seen increased civic involvement and participation at local government forums, specifically at school board meetings. During the COVID-19 pandemic, parents are taking notice of what and how their children are being taught in the classroom, hot-button social issues being weaved into the curriculum, and what safety protocols their child is supposed to follow while attending school. While some of these meetings may get heated, most of the parents who have been attending these meetings have simply voiced their passions and concerns for their children and their futures.

While we agree with you that any threat of violence against these government officials should be condemned and investigated, no government official has the right to claim that a citizen may not peacefully speak out against government policies. Statements made by officials like former Governor Terry McAuliffe of Virginia, who publicly stated, "I don't think parents should be telling schools what they should teach,"<sup>1</sup> are utterly unacceptable. Government officials need to recognize that in our Constitutional republic, they are elected to represent the public. While they should never be subjected to threats, they are not above criticism or disagreement from the citizens who elected them. If we are to live in a free society, it is your job as Attorney General of the United States to defend the rights of all citizens.

Your October 4, 2021, memorandum to several directors across the Department of Justice informed them of your intention as the Attorney General to promulgate "a series of measures designed to address the rise in criminal conduct directed toward school personnel."<sup>2</sup> While we applaud your dedication to combatting criminal activity across the United States, we have grave concerns with your announcement. We are requesting answers to the following questions to provide clarity on your Department's intentions. Please respond no later than November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021:

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<sup>1</sup> Bernstein, Brittany. "McAuliffe Argues Parents Shouldn't Have Control over Public School Curriculum." *National Review*, 29 Sept. 2021, <https://www.nationalreview.com/news/mcauliffe-argues-parents-shouldnt-have-control-over-public-school-curriculum/>.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, M. U.S. Department of Justice. (2021). *Justice Department Addresses Violent Threats Against School Officials and Teachers*.

1. What specific cases are you referencing in your memorandum that rise to the level of “criminal conduct?”
2. What criteria/behavior is the Department of Justice considering “criminal conduct?”
3. What federal statutes do you plan to cite in your prosecution of these parents?
4. Who will be conducting the investigation into these cases? Please provide details on the roles of the FBI, United States Attorneys, State and local law enforcement, and any other entities that will be involved.
5. Will you be looking into other cases of alleged intimidation of school board members who have attempted to end COVID-era policies?

As the top law enforcement officer in the United States, it is your responsibility to combat criminal behavior as well as defend the Constitutional rights of all Americans. We hope you will take these duties seriously and not stifle free speech while moving forward with your investigations.

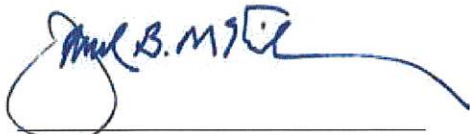
Sincerely,



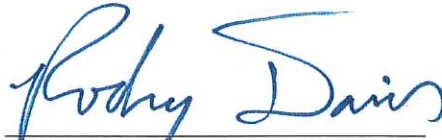
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David B. McKinley  
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Vern Buchanan  
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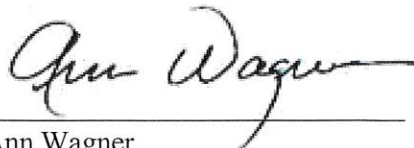
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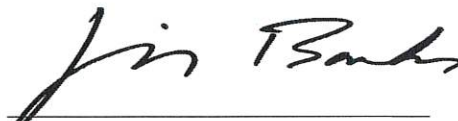
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Pete Sessions  
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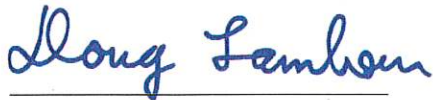
Mo Brooks  
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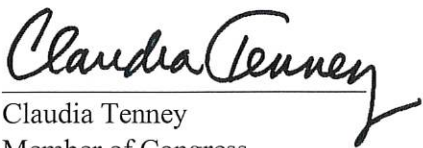
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Doug Lamborn  
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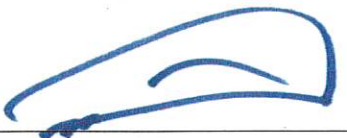
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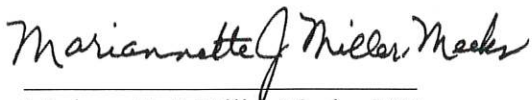
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Mariannette J. Miller-Meeks, M.D.  
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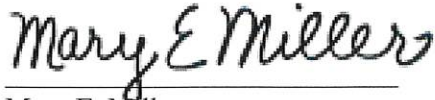
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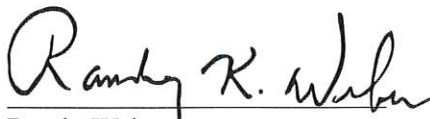
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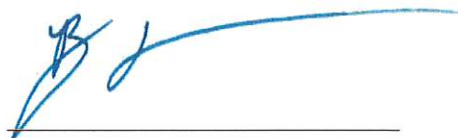
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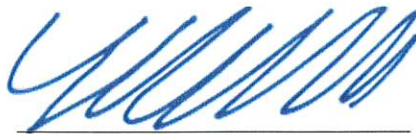
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