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January 15, 2025

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: Swift Confirmation of President Trump's National Security Team**

Dear Leader Thune and Leader Schumer:

We, the undersigned attorneys general of 18 states, call on the Senate to confirm as soon as possible Governor Kristi Noem, former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi, and Kash Patel to lead the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice (“DOJ”), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), respectively. Even under ordinary circumstances, it is imperative that President Trump have his national security team in place on Day One. And we are not in ordinary times. The events over the New Year holiday are a grim reminder of why any delay in confirming America First leaders to these important posts is unacceptable.

In the early morning hours of January 1, a radicalized man inspired by ISIS killed 15 people and wounded dozens more in a heinous terrorist attack in New Orleans. A few hours later, a vehicle exploded outside a hotel owned by President Trump in Las Vegas. Numerous bystanders were injured. Absent the immediate change in direction in our immigration and national security policies that President Trump has promised—change that can be fully effected only if President Trump's chosen nominees are in place—these disturbing events will be a harbinger of more tragedies to come.

For four years, the Biden Administration has put Americans in danger. President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas's reckless, open border policies have allowed millions of illegal immigrants to enter the country unchecked, unvetted, and unmonitored.<sup>1</sup> Among those millions have been suspected ISIS terrorists,<sup>2</sup> Laken Riley's killer,<sup>3</sup> and hundreds of violent gang

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<sup>1</sup> *Border Crisis Startling Stats: The Biden-Harris Border Crisis Continues as Nationwide Encounters Reach Over 11 Million Since FY2021*, U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY (Jan. 3, 2025), 1, <https://homeland.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/November-24-SS.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Stepheny Price et al., *Authorities nab 8 suspected terrorists with ties to ISIS in multi-city sting operation*, FOX NEWS (June 11, 2024), <https://www.foxnews.com/us/authorities-nab-8-suspected-terrorists-ties-isis-multi-city-sting-operation>.

<sup>3</sup> Jennie Taer, *Migrant charged with Laken Riley's murder easily entered US despite links to bloodthirsty gang, bombshell Post probe reveals*, NEW YORK POST (Mar. 8, 2024), <https://nypost.com/2024/03/08/us-news/migrant-charged-with-murdering-laken-rileys-easy-path-to-us/>.

members.<sup>4</sup> Border Patrol has also apprehended more than 66,000 Chinese nationals<sup>5</sup> and nearly 400 individuals on the terrorist watchlist<sup>6</sup> attempting to enter our country. Disturbingly, these are just the bad actors of which we are aware. There have also been more than two million known gotaways who entered our country under President Biden and whose identity, affiliations, and intentions are unknown.<sup>7</sup> The national security risks of a porous, unguarded border are obvious and alarming. Governor Noem is the person America needs to help President Trump restore security at the border.

The Department of Justice and FBI are also in desperate need of reform. Violent crime has plagued American cities under President Biden. FBI crime statistics—which the FBI had to correct after falsely claiming there had been a decrease in violent crime—show a nearly five-percent increase in violent crime in 2022.<sup>8</sup> This deterioration in the safety of American communities is not surprising. Instead focusing on getting violent criminals off the streets, President Biden’s DOJ and FBI have targeted concerned parents attending school board meetings as though they were violent extremists; labelled conservative Catholics as domestic terrorists; and attempted to weaponize the justice system against political opponents, including President Trump. General Bondi and Mr. Patel are who we need to get DOJ and the FBI back on track and focused on protecting Americans.

Something must change. And on November 5, 2024, the American people made resoundingly clear that President Trump is the leader they want to bring about that change. To fulfill his mandate, President Trump needs the Senate to swiftly confirm his nominees. To delay and obstruct these nominations would be to delay and obstruct the will of the people.

As state attorneys general, we have pushed back relentlessly against President Biden’s lawless border policies and reckless disregard for public safety. We have seen the negative consequences this Administration’s ineptitude and misguided priorities have had for our constituents. We know how important it is for the country for President Trump to reverse course and bring law and order back to our border and communities. That is exactly what Governor Noem, General Bondi, and Mr. Patel will help him accomplish.

Shortly after President Biden was elected, Senator Schumer demanded that the Senate start holding hearings on President Biden’s nominees as early as possible “so that key cabinet officials can be confirmed on January 20th.” He said that rapid confirmation of the incoming President’s team after an election is “traditional for a new president.” We hope that Senate Democrats heed Senate Schumer’s words. The obstruction of President Trump’s nominees by Senate Democrats

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<sup>4</sup> Julia Ainsley, *DHS is seeking more than 600 migrants for possible ties to Venezuelan gang*, NBC NEWS (Oct. 23, 2024), <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/dhs-identified-600-migrants-possible-ties-venezuelan-gang-rcna176020>.

<sup>5</sup> *Border Crisis Startling Stats*, *supra* note 1, at 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Border Crisis Startling Stats: CBP Records More Than 140,000 Encounters Nationwide to Start FY2025*, U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY (Nov. 20, 2024), 1, <https://homeland.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/October-FY25-Startling-Stats.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> *Border Crisis Startling Stats*, *supra* note 1, at 1.

<sup>8</sup> John R. Lott Jr., *Stealth Edit: FBI Quietly Revises Violent Crime Stats*, REALCLEARINVESTIGATIONS (Oct. 16, 2024), [https://www.realclearinvestigations.com/articles/2024/10/16/stealth\\_edit\\_fbi\\_quietly\\_revises\\_violent\\_crime\\_stats\\_1065396.html](https://www.realclearinvestigations.com/articles/2024/10/16/stealth_edit_fbi_quietly_revises_violent_crime_stats_1065396.html).

in 2017 was unconscionable. To repeat that spectacle today, given the security threats our country faces, would be even worse and carry grave consequences for the security of the American people.

The events of January 1 should remind us that all Americans have a common interest in securing our country against foreign and domestic threats. Now is not the time for partisan gamesmanship in the confirmation process. We ask the Senate to confirm Governor Noem, General Bondi, and Mr. Patel at the earliest possible date.

Sincerely,

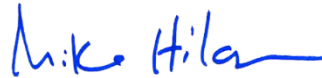


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Elizabeth B. Murrill  
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Attorney General of Arkansas



Drew Wrigley  
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Ashley Moody  
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Chris Carr  
Attorney General of Georgia



Gentner Drummond  
Attorney General of Oklahoma



Raúl Labrador  
Attorney General of Idaho



Alan Wilson  
Attorney General of South Carolina



Todd Rokita  
Indiana Attorney General



Marty Jackley  
Attorney General of South Dakota



Brenna Bird  
Attorney General of Iowa



Ken Paxton  
Attorney General of Texas



Lynn Fitch  
Attorney General of Mississippi



Derek Brown  
Attorney General of Utah



Andrew Bailey  
Missouri Attorney General



Jason Miyares  
Attorney General of Virginia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Austin Knusden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Austin Knusden  
Attorney General of Montana