



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

April 20, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Director Wray:

The Committee on Homeland Security (Committee) is conducting oversight of the recent violent attack on law enforcement officers and property at the site of the future Atlanta Public Safety Training Center in Atlanta, Georgia. On March 5, 2023, the Atlanta Police Department arrested 35 suspected violent extremists who carried out the attack.<sup>1</sup> The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) later charged 23 of those arrested with domestic terrorism under Georgia state law.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, these extremist tactics and violent acts resemble the sustained violence by anarchists and violent left-wing extremists in 2020 when they vandalized and destroyed federal property in Portland, Oregon.<sup>3</sup>

According to reports by the Atlanta Police Department, “a group of violent agitators used the cover of a peaceful protest” to carry out “a coordinated attack on construction equipment and police officers.”<sup>4</sup> The reports continued that “[t]hey changed into black clothing and entered the construction area and began to throw large rocks, bricks, Molotov cocktails, and fireworks at

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<sup>1</sup> Press Release, Atlanta Police Dep’t, *Update: Mugshots and Arrestee Info Added- 3/5/2023 Atlanta Public Safety Training Center Demonstrations* (Mar. 5, 2023) <https://www.atlantapd.org/Home/Components/News/News/3927/631>.

<sup>2</sup> See Matt Delaney, *Dozens arrested following attack at Atlanta’s future police training facility*, WASH. TIMES (Mar. 6, 2023) <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2023/mar/6/dozens-arrested-following-attack-atlantas-future-p>. See also Press Release, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, *GBI Charges 23 People with Domestic Terrorism Following Attack on Site of Future Atlanta Public Safety Training Center* (Mar. 6, 2023) <https://gbi.georgia.gov/press-releases/2023-03-06/gbi-charges-23-people-domestic-terrorism-following-attack-site-future>.

<sup>3</sup> Tom Batchelor, *Portland Protestors Have Caused \$2.3 Million in Damage to Federal Buildings*, NEWSWEEK (Feb. 4, 2021) <https://www.newsweek.com/portland-protesters-damage-cost-federal-buildings-1566821>.

<sup>4</sup> Press Release, *Georgia Bureau of Investigation, GBI Charges 23 People with Domestic Terrorism Following Attack on Site of Future Atlanta Public Safety Training Center* (Mar. 6, 2023) <https://gbi.georgia.gov/press-releases/2023-03-06/gbi-charges-23-people-domestic-terrorism-following-attack-site-future>.

police officers. The agitators destroyed multiple pieces of construction equipment by arson and vandalism.”<sup>5</sup> The Atlanta Police Department officers, however, exercised restraint and used nonlethal enforcement methods to disband the group and arrest those involved.<sup>6</sup>

While the GBI has charged 23 agitators with domestic terrorism under Georgia state law, the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) Atlanta Field Office is working to determine if any federal laws were violated in connection with the violent attacks.<sup>7</sup> According to the Atlanta Police Department, only two of the suspected anarchists live in Georgia.<sup>8</sup> The remaining offenders traveled from various states across the country,<sup>9</sup> suggesting a nationally coordinated, organized, and developed plan of attack.

Notably, one of the individuals charged with domestic terrorism at the site of the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center is an employee of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), a biased and far-left organization.<sup>10</sup> Following the violent attack, the SPLC released a statement denouncing the employee’s arrest and blaming police “escalation” for the violence.<sup>11</sup> This statement is concerning as both the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FBI have cited and relied upon SPLC’s opinions for official products, raising serious questions about those products’ objectivity and impartiality. For example, on January 23, 2023, the FBI’s Richmond Field Office published an analysis that identified “radical-traditionalist Catholic[s]” as “racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists.”<sup>12</sup> The document cited the SPLC as a prominent source used to support this assessment.<sup>13</sup> The FBI eventually rescinded the document after it was widely denounced.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, in a 2021 quarterly bulletin by DHS’s Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) regarding a national threat report, I&A cited an SPLC assessment about extremist movements.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Supra* note 1.

<sup>7</sup> See FBI Atlanta (@FBIAtlanta), TWITTER (Mar. 6, 2023, 3:30 PM). To date, the FBI has not made any determinations.

<sup>8</sup> *Supra* note 1.

<sup>9</sup> One offender is from Canada and another from France. See *supra*, note 1.

<sup>10</sup> Matthew Impelli, *Lawyer’s Arrest at Atlanta Protest Speaks Criticism of SPLC*, NEWSWEEK, Mar. 6, 2023, <https://www.newsweek.com/lawyers-arrest-atlanta-protest-sparks-criticism-splc-1785889>.

<sup>11</sup> Press Release, Southern Poverty Law Center, *NLG AND SPLC STATEMENTS ON ARREST OF LEGAL OBSERVER*, (Mar. 6, 2023).

<sup>12</sup> Fed. Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Domain Perspective, Interest of Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremist Radical-Traditionalist Catholic Ideology Almost Certainly Presents New Mitigation Opportunities* (Jan. 23, 2023).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> See e.g., Jerry Dunleavy, *Unreliable sources: FBI’s string of embarrassing failures with left-wing sources exposed*, WASH. EXAM. (Feb. 13, 2023) (Statement from FBI to the Wash. Exam. (“This particular field office product . . . does not meet the exacting standards of the FBI. Upon learning of the document, FBI Headquarters quickly began taking action to remove the document from FBI systems and conduct a review of the basis for the document. Upon learning of the document, FBI Headquarters quickly began taking action to remove the document from FBI systems and conduct a review of the basis for the document.”)). *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec., Office of Intelligence and Analysis, *National Threat Evaluation and Reporting, Quarter 4 – 2021*.

To assist the Committee in its oversight of the roles of DHS and FBI in monitoring and conducting oversight of the recent violent attack that occurred at the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site, please provide the following documents and information as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 4, 2023:

1. All documents and communications, including but not limited to, memoranda, intelligence bulletins, threat assessments, situational information reports, briefing materials, and requests for assistance, referring or relating to the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site, from January 1, 2022 to the present;
2. A document sufficient to show a list of each instance that DHS or the FBI has cited or used in any of its documents, information from any SPLC reports or assessments, from January 2021 to the present;
3. A document sufficient to describe DHS and the FBI's knowledge about whether and how the violent attack on the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center was coordinated around the country, including but not limited to, internal participant communication, any communications DHS and the FBI had with technology companies before the attacks, posts on their social media platforms regarding plans for violence at the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site, and any funding mechanisms used to support the violent activities;
4. A document sufficient to explain what information DHS and the FBI shared with federal, state, or local law enforcement departments and agencies about possible violence at the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site, including to which entities DHS and the FBI disseminated information and dates of transmittal;
5. A document sufficient to explain whether any DHS or FBI employees communicated with any of the participants in the violent attack at the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site, including whether the FBI had any related undercover employees, online covert employees, or confidential human sources;
6. A document sufficient to explain if any of the individuals now charged with domestic terrorism as a result of the attack at the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center are listed on any federal government watchlists or in any federal government systems, including any identification as an individual affiliated with domestic violent extremist movements; and
7. A document sufficient to explain what actions DHS and the FBI are taking to support state and local law enforcement partners to prevent future acts of violence and destruction against the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site or similar facilities.

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Upon providing the requested documents and information, please provide a briefing to Committee staff as soon as possible, but no later than May 4, 2023. We also request that the FBI notify the Committee as soon as it determines whether any participants in the violent attack at the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center site committed any federal crimes.

An attachment contains instructions for responding to this request. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Homeland Security Majority Committee staff at (202) 226-8417.

Per House Rule X, the Committee on Homeland Security is the principal committee of jurisdiction for overall homeland security policy and has special oversight functions of “all Government activities relating to homeland security, including the interaction of all departments and agencies with the Department of Homeland Security.”

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



MARK E. GREEN, MD  
Chairman



AUGUST PFLUGER  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Counterterrorism,  
Law Enforcement, and Intelligence



DAN BISHOP  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations,  
and Accountability

Encl.

cc: The Honorable Bennie Thompson, Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security

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The Honorable Seth Magaziner, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Counterterrorism, Law Enforcement, and Intelligence

The Honorable Glenn Ivey, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability