

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

March 28, 2025

Dan Bongino
Deputy Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
U.S. Department of Justice
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Deputy Director Bongino:

As the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) finalizes its new leadership structure, we are deeply concerned that Director Kash Patel's senior leadership team is unprepared for the challenges of managing our nation's premier law enforcement agency and its approximately 38,000 public servants. As the newly appointed Deputy Director, your past public statements—which include inflammatory remarks and unsubstantiated accusations against the FBI, including calling for the Bureau's disbandment¹—raise concerns about your ability to impartially lead the Bureau and credibly command the respect of its workforce. The Deputy Director oversees all FBI domestic and international investigative and intelligence activities and has historically been a career agent with extensive experience in the Bureau.² Your record,³ on the other hand, does not reflect the expertise required to manage the FBI's complex and expansive operations. To help address these concerns, we ask that you answer the following questions by April 11, 2025:

1. You previously said, “We don’t just fire the people who did this. Everyone who stood by and did nothing while the Department of Justice and the FBI have been ravaged, ravaged by ‘corruptocrats’ [sic]. *Everyone gets fired. Everyone* (emphasis added).”⁴ As Deputy Director, do you still believe that every one of the FBI's employees who “stood by” should be fired? How do you intend to determine which of the FBI's approximately 38,000 employees “stood by”?
2. On September 26, 2022, you said on your podcast: “The only thing that is going to stop the FBI from doing what they’re doing now, which is become full-time activists and bouncers, in many cases, thugs for the Democrat [sic] party, is *imposing real material losses on them* (emphasis added). Fire everyone involved in this stuff. Everyone—no

¹ See e.g. Ben Goggin et al., *Dan Bongino's Yearslong History of FBI Criticism and Conspiracy Theories*, CNN (Feb. 24, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/dan-bongino-fbi-trump-criticism-conspiracy-theories-deputy-director-rcna193526>; Tom Dreisbach et al., *New Deputy Director Dan Bongino Previously Called for Imprisoning Democrats*, NPR (Mar. 3, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/03/03/nx-s1-5308020/dan-bongino-trump-fbi-director-conspiracies-podcast>.

² Ken Dilanian et al., *FBI Agents Express Shock and Dismay Over Naming of Right-Wing Podcaster to No. 2 Post*, NBC News (Feb. 24, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/fbi-agents-express-shock-dismay-naming-right-wing-podcaster-no-2-post-rcna193498>; see also @KenDilanianNBC (Feb. 23, 2025, 9:38 PM), <https://x.com/KenDilanianNBC/status/1893852987715457059>.

³ Rachel Treisman, *What to Know About Dan Bongino, The Media Personality Tapped as FBI Deputy Director*, NPR (Feb. 24, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/24/nx-s1-5306990/dan-bongino-fbi-deputy-director>.

⁴ Stuart A. Thompson et al., *How Dan Bongino Would Run the F.B.I., According to Dan Bongino*, N.Y. TIMES (Mar. 6, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/06/technology/dan-bongino-fbi.html> (emphasis added).

excuses. Disband the entity.”⁵ Now that you are a member of the Bureau’s senior leadership team, do you believe the thousands of personnel who report to you still need to suffer “real material losses”? Do you still believe the FBI should be disbanded? If yes, how do you plan on implementing such an agenda?

3. On August 29, 2024, in response to the FBI releasing information about the Butler assassination attempt, you posted: “Folks, the FBI is at it again. I don’t trust these people at all.”⁶ How can the FBI’s career law enforcement personnel earn your trust in light of this statement? Conversely, how do you intend to earn their trust when you have spent years attacking their integrity?
4. On November 14, 2024, you described the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol and the placement of pipe bombs outside of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and Republican National Committee (RNC) headquarters as an “inside job” and said:

There is a massive cover-up, because the person who planted those pipe bombs—they don’t want you to know who it was, because it’s either a connected anti-Trump insider, or this was an inside job. Those bombs were planted there. This was a setup. I have zero doubt.... And whoever goes into FBI... you better get an answer... about why.⁷

Now that you are inside the FBI, have you seen evidence to prove your implausible and outrageous allegation that the January 6 attack was an “inside job”? If yes, when do you plan to provide that evidence to the public and Congress? If no, will you apologize to the American people for perpetuating this baseless conspiracy theory?

5. Earlier this year, you said on your podcast about the unsolved January 6, 2021 pipe bombs case:

It is clear, this all adds up to they know who this person is. They just don’t want you to know who this it is. Later in the podcast, you went on to say that “the FBI knew the entire time the identity of this person and then tried to unknow it, because it was an insider and an inside attack and a plot to, you know, stop Republicans from questioning the election results.”⁸

You then claimed that “they did conduct an investigation, a legitimate one, for probably a couple of weeks because a friend of mine, who’s a federal agent, was involved in it. And they told him, once they started to hone in on who it was, to stand down.”⁹ We are disappointed that the pipe bomb case remains unsolved, given the significant danger this threat presented to the public, staff, and elected officials at the RNC and DNC on January

⁵ The Dan Bongino Show, Breaking Update from FBI Whistleblower (Ep. 1859) (Sept. 26, 2022), <https://rumble.com/v1lllvz-breaking-update-from-fbi-whistleblower-ep.-1859-the-dan-bongino-show.html?start=215> (emphasis added).

⁶ Dan Bongino, *FBI Finally Releases Details on Trump Shooter ... But There's a Big Issue*, Facebook (Aug. 29, 2024), <https://www.facebook.com/dan.bongino/videos/1643531796208049/?mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=C03jSrIEaVysP0zr>.

⁷ The Dan Bongino Show, Heads Explode as Trump Makes Another Huge Appointment (Ep. 2371) (Nov. 14, 2024), <https://rumble.com/v5p9avz-heads-explode-as-trump-makes-another-huge-appointment-ep.-2371-11142024.html?start=2939>.

⁸ The Dan Bongino Show, Sunday Special with Julie Kelly, Mike Benz and Darren Beattie (Jan. 12, 2025), <https://rumble.com/v67vqug-sunday-special-with-julie-kelly-mike-benz-and-darren-beattie-011225.html>.

⁹ *Id.*

6, 2021. Your claim that the FBI is responsible for a cover-up is an extremely serious allegation that you have an obligation either to substantiate or repudiate. Now that you have access to the information you have long claimed that the FBI possesses, can you answer who was responsible for the pipe bombs on January 6, 2021 and provide evidence proving their identity to the public and Congress? If no, will you apologize to the men and women of the FBI for spreading this dangerous and irresponsible lie?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman, U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee