

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 17, 2025

Mr. Jamieson Greer
Acting Special Counsel
U.S. Office of Special Counsel
1730 M Street NW, Suite 218
Washington, D.C., 20036

Dear Acting Special Counsel Greer:

We write with alarm regarding ongoing retaliation by the Trump administration against federal employees at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) who exercised their legal right to make protected whistleblower disclosures.

On August 25, 2025, more than 190 FEMA employees made a protected whistleblower disclosure to Congress, called the Katrina Declaration, outlining ways Trump administration officials are putting lives at risk by undermining FEMA's ability to perform disaster response and recovery.¹ On September 17, 2025² and October 18, 2025³ our Committees wrote to FEMA, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the DHS Office of the Inspector General expressing concern that all public signers of the Katrina Declaration had been placed on indefinite administrative leave without valid cause. Their disclosure to Congress is protected under federal whistleblower laws.⁴ Furthermore, these employees have a First Amendment right to publicly express their views, including in their personal capacity.

On November 25, 2025, the FEMA employees who had been placed on administrative leave were correctly reinstated. FEMA legal counsel concluded, "the employee[']s actions are protected under the Whistleblower Protection Act (5 U.S.C. 2302(b)(8)) and the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution." Counsel further recommended, "that this matter is closed with no disciplinary action."⁵

Despite this clear determination, on December 1, 2025, the employees were again placed on administrative leave without any new evidence of wrongdoing. In a statement to the media, a

¹ Stand Up for Science, *The Katrina Declaration* (Aug. 25, 2025) (online at www.standupforscience.net/fema-katrina-declaration).

² Letter from Ranking Member Rick Larsen, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, et al. to Secretary Kristi Noem, Department of Homeland Security (Sept. 17, 2025) (online at http://democrats-transportation.house.gov/imo/media/doc/fema_whistleblower_letter_final.pdf).

³ Letter from Ranking Member Rick Larsen, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, et al. to David Richardson, Federal Emergency Management Agency and Inspector General Cuffari (Oct. 18, 2025) (<https://democrats-transportation.house.gov/news/press-releases/democratic-ranking-members-to-fema-head-and-dhs-inspector-general-stop-retaliation-against-fema-whistleblowers>).

⁴ 5 U.S.C. 2302(b)(8)-(9), Pub. L. No. 101-12 as amended.

⁵ Information provided to Committee staff.

DHS spokesperson claimed the employees “were wrongly and without authorization reinstated by bureaucrats acting outside their authority,” and that “the unauthorized reinstatement was swiftly corrected by senior leadership.”⁶ This statement disregards FEMA legal counsel’s findings and fails to identify any new evidence to justify renewed suspension.

We expect that the Office of Special Counsel will find clear evidence of whistleblower retaliation, reinstate the FEMA employees, and pursue disciplinary action against all officials who retaliated against them. Should FEMA or DHS refuse to comply with your recommended actions, we urge that the case be referred to the Merit Systems Protection Board for proper enforcement.

We look forward to your prompt response. If you have any questions, please contact Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Democratic staff at (202) 226-8776, Oversight and Government Reform Committee Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051, and Homeland Security Committee Democratic staff at (202) 226-2616.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure



Greg Stanton
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Public Buildings,
Economic Development, and
Emergency Management



Robert Garcia
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform



Bennie Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security

⁶ Bloomberg, *FEMA Puts Whistleblowers Back on Leave After Reinstatements (1)* (December 1, 2025) (online at <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/daily-labor-report/fema-puts-whistleblowers-on-leave-shortly-after-reinstating-them>).

Mr. Jamieson Greer

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cc: Chairman Sam Graves, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Chairman James Comer, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Chairman Andrew Garbarino, Committee on Homeland Security