

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 6, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Special Agent Gregory Ford
Director
Department of the Army
Criminal Investigative Division

Dear Director Ford:

I have received disturbing reports from multiple military advocacy groups regarding the events leading up to the death of U.S. Army, PFC Denisha Montgomery. PFC Montgomery was assigned to the 139th Military Police Company, and was deployed on active duty to U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden in Wiesbaden, Germany. The circumstances surrounding PFC Montgomery's death raise serious questions which require further investigation from your division and answers to Congress.

By way of background, in a July 19, 2022, video call with her family, PFC Montgomery recounted troubling events that occurred that same day.¹ In the video, PFC Montgomery told her family that she had been physically assaulted by four of her fellow military police officers while traveling back to the Army base in a rental vehicle from a waterpark. Montgomery conveyed details of how she was choked, causing her to struggle to breathe, and terrified in thinking she was going to die.

PFC Montgomery also said on video that a week prior to her assault, she had reported a sexual assault and rape of another female soldier in her platoon. Montgomery tearfully stated she did not trust her fellow MP's, she didn't trust military leadership, and confirmed she was going to report the July 19, 2022, incident to the Army's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) the following day.

According to PFC Montgomery's video allegations, one of the four MP's that allegedly attacked her on July 19, 2022, was also her roommate. In the video, PFC Montgomery shows her family the room she was staying in and that the only thing that separated PFC Montgomery from her attacker was a loosely hung bedsheet.

According to her video, PFC Montgomery wanted to return home to her husband and three small children at Fort Stewart, GA. The week prior to her death, PFC Montgomery sent her husband photographs of her bags packed in anticipation of her return home. Tragically, on August

¹ Video on file with the committee.

9, 2022, Montgomery was found in her barracks hanging from her military issued belt. The Army listed her death as a suicide.

According to news reports, CID provided the family an account of the July 19, 2022, assault involving PFC Montgomery that conflicted with PFC Montgomery's videoed description to her family. CID reportedly said that two individuals that were not in her platoon tried to sexually assault PFC Montgomery in a bathroom at a waterpark. At that point, soldiers that were with PFC Montgomery at the waterpark unsuccessfully chased down the unknown individuals, prior to them departing the location.² The clear conflict between the video description from PFC Montgomery and CID demands explanation.

Following her death, the family received multiple inquiries from a soldier that PFC Montgomery named in her video trying to gather information. According to attorneys for PFC Montgomery's family, this soldier called PFC Montgomery's family on his own volition and stated that he had been sent to Germany by his supervisor to check on PFC Montgomery because she was suicidal. According to the family's attorney, PFC Montgomery was not suicidal and the family found the phone calls to be inappropriate and suspicious in light of the fact this soldier was one of the alleged assailants mentioned by PFC Montgomery in her video.

Last year, I took to the floor of the United States Senate to advocate for the passage of the Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act.³ In my remarks, I stated that "Far too many woman and men in the armed forces are sexually assaulted, and most never see justice."⁴ The allegations presented to my office are disturbing and illustrate an example of a sexual assault that has yet to see justice.

In order for Congress to perform an objective and independent review of this matter, please respond to the following questions no later than December 20th, 2022.

1. Please provide the full and complete CID report.
2. According to texts provided to my office, PFC Montgomery reported her assault to her command staff, but was allegedly told that if she did report the incident she would be disciplined for assault for fighting back against her assailants. Has CID investigated whether or not this fact pattern is true? If not, why not? Please explain.
3. Has CID identified and interviewed all the occupants of the vehicle stemming from the physical assault that occurred on July 19, 2022? If so, please provide all records. If not, why not?
4. Did PFC Montgomery report a sexual assault and rape to CID or anyone on her command staff prior to July 19, 2022? If so, what is the status of that investigation?

² Rich McHugh & Sean Noone, News Nation, (Oct. 6, 2022) New Details Revealed in Army Private's Death, [New details revealed in Army Pfc. Denisha Montgomery's death \(newsnationnow.com\)](https://www.newsnationnow.com/story/news/nation/2022/10/06/army-private-death-new-details/7014411002/)

³ Grassley: We Need to Support our Women and Men in Uniform, Pass the Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act ([senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov/legislation/record/grassley-statement-10-11-22))

⁴ *Id.*

5. In a video call with her family on July 19, 2022, PFC Montgomery stated that a soldier stationed in Fort Stewart, GA traveled to Germany to further a romantic relationship with a female military police officer. In her video, PFC Montgomery stated that this soldier was involved in the physical assault against her on the way back from the waterpark. Is CID aware of this allegation? If so, is it investigating?
6. Does U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden require military credentials to enter and exit the base? If so, has CID reviewed entry and exit records to help identify who was on base at the time of PFC Montgomery's death? Please provide all records. If not, why not?
7. Is CID in possession of the July 19, 2022, video from PFC Montgomery? If not, why not?

The events that led to PFC Denisha Montgomery's death need to be thoroughly investigated and clearly communicated to the family and my office. The men and women of the Armed Forces and their families deserve complete transparency in this matter. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter. Should you have any questions, contact my Committee staff at (202) 224-5225.

Sincerely



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

cc: The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary
Department of Defense

The Honorable Robert Storch
Inspector General
Department of Defense