



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

DEC 22 2021

Dear Ranking Member Grassley:

We write in response to your letters of October 7, 2021 and December 6, 2021 concerning a one-page memorandum issued by Attorney General Garland on October 4, 2021 entitled "Partnership Among Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Law Enforcement To Address Threats Against School Administrators, Board Members, Teachers, and Staff." The memorandum responds to concerns about violence, threats of violence, and other criminal conduct. It calls for partnership and coordination between federal and non-federal officials in assessing and addressing violence and threats of violence. And, in doing so, the memorandum makes absolutely clear in the first paragraph that "spirited debate about policy matters is protected under our Constitution." These protections clearly and importantly cover debate concerning school board policies. As the Attorney General reaffirmed in congressional testimony, it is the right of parents to be involved in the education of their children, and it is "the role of the First Amendment to protect their ability to be involved."

The Justice Department has no greater responsibility than keeping the American people safe. To that end, the Department has taken action in a wide range of contexts to keep the American people safe by preventing violence and threats of violence. These include, among others, efforts to protect the safety of those who are threatened because of the jobs they hold—namely, election officials and workers; judges; law enforcement officers; prosecutors; flight crews and flight attendants; Members of Congress; and school administrators, board members, teachers, and staff. The Justice Department's efforts are aimed at identifying, and, where appropriate, prosecuting violence and threats of violence that violate federal law.

Thank you for your interest in our efforts to protect all people in the United States from violence and threats of violence. Please do not hesitate to contact this office if we may provide additional assistance regarding this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter S. Hyun".

Peter S. Hyun
Acting Assistant Attorney General