

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

January 17, 2023

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

We write to urge the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to immediately investigate pro-Hamas activists defacing national cemeteries run by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. On January 8, 2024, several media outlets reported that pro-Hamas extremists vandalized the Los Angeles National Cemetery, where more than 80,000 veterans are buried. The vandalism included the word "INTIFADA" spray-painted on the grounds of the cemetery. In addition, these activists also spray-painted the phrase "FREE GAZA," as well as an upside-down red triangle – a symbol used by the Nazis in concentration camps to categorize and identify prisoners.

The defacement of the Los Angeles National Cemetery is disgusting, anti-American, and a testament as to how far pro-Hamas extremists will go to advocate on behalf of a Foreign Terrorist Organization. Federal law explicitly prohibits individuals from "willfully injur[ing] or destroy[ing]... any structure, plaque, statue, or other monument on public property commemorating the service of any person or persons in the armed forces of the United States." The conduct by pro-Hamas extremists at the Los Angeles National Cemetery fits squarely into the conduct described by law.

Veterans represent the best of America. The men and women who serve in the U.S. military exemplify the sacrifice, determination, and bravery that all Americans should strive for. Like those currently serving in our military, the veterans buried at the Los Angeles National Cemetery fought to protect the fundamental rights of all Americans in countless wars, even the rights of Americans who lack the moral clarity to condemn terrorism.

Pro-Hamas radicals and terrorist sympathizers must immediately face consequences for their immoral and illegal tactics. Therefore, we urge the DOJ to investigate the pro-Hamas activists responsible for defacing the Los Angeles National Cemetery, given their clear violation of federal law.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Kevin Cramer
U.S. Senator

Marsha Blackburn
U.S. Senator

Rick Scott
U.S. Senator

Mike Braun
U.S. Senator

Dan Sullivan
U.S. Senator

John Hoeven
U.S. Senator

James E. Risch
U.S. Senator

Ted Budd
U.S. Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
U.S. Senator

Steve Daines
U.S. Senator

Deb Fischer
U.S. Senator

Mike Crapo
U.S. Senator

Lindsey Graham
U.S. Senator

Cindy Hyde-Smith
U.S. Senator

Susan Collins
U.S. Senator