



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of the Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

August 12, 2026

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor of Tennessee
Office of the Governor
State Capitol, 1st Floor
600 Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

The Department of Justice and the American people extend our heartfelt appreciation for the unwavering support you have offered to the residents, workers, and visitors of Washington, D.C. this past year. Our Nation's capital is not merely home to hundreds of thousands of Americans—it is the heart of our republic, the site of our most cherished national monuments, and a timeless symbol of freedom.

Sadly, years of pro-crime policies and laws, followed by predictably alarming violent crime rates, turned Washington into a capital of a different sort—one of violence and lawlessness. On August 11, 2025, seeking to free Washington from the grip of violent criminal actors, President Trump ordered the mobilization of the District of Columbia National Guard and directed the Secretary of War to work with Governors across the country to deploy additional National Guard units to meet this critical mission.

You answered that duty without hesitation. This mission demanded significant sacrifice from you and your states—and your efforts delivered extraordinary results. Over the past year, thanks to courageous and steadfast support from your National Guard units, the D.C. Safe and Beautiful Task Force executed more than 15,000 criminal arrests, seized over 1,500 illegal firearms, and located more than 40 missing children. Your Guardsmen intervened in over 250 assaults, rendered medical aid more than 700 times, and administered lifesaving NARCAN nearly 300 times. The Task Force's impact on public safety cannot be overstated: over the 12 months since the National Guard was mobilized, homicides are down 48%, motor vehicle thefts are down 53%, and robberies are down 34% as compared to the 12 months prior.

Your efforts go beyond just numbers. Thanks to the brave men and women of your National Guard, residents and visitors, young and old, feel safer walking through the streets, parks, and monuments of this beautiful city. Together with your help, we have proven that Americans do not have to acquiesce to rampant violence and crime—public safety is a choice.

Despite these historic achievements, the Department is aware that certain D.C. councilmembers have issued letters attempting to diminish your accomplishments and malign your citizens as so-called "outside military forces." These claims are legally baseless and amount to nothing more than political theater.

D.C. politicians cannot change the facts. Washington, D.C. is Safe and Beautiful today because of your leadership and the courage of the men and women of your National Guard. They have saved lives and changed the trajectory of the city. The Department of Justice deeply appreciates your service and your indispensable contributions to protecting our Nation's capital.

Sincerely,



Colin M. McDonald
Office of the Deputy Attorney General