

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 17, 2025

The Honorable Steven A. Stebbins  
Acting Inspector General  
Office of the Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense  
4800 Mark Center Dr  
Alexandria, VA 22350

Dear Acting Inspector General Stebbins,

We write to express our concern about the deployment of U.S. troops to American cities, including in Los Angeles; Washington, DC; Portland; Chicago; and Memphis. The military's expanded use to support immigration operations and domestic law enforcement activities at home is fundamentally un-Constitutional, dangerous for American civil rights, and risks straining military readiness and resources, weakening troop morale, undermining recruitment and retention, and eroding public trust in the military. Neither the active-duty military nor the National Guard are intended or trained at scale for the purposes that the Administration has claimed they are used for, including "crime-fighting." We are concerned that these domestic deployments erode the military's and National Guard's ability to prepare for their critical missions. We urgently request that you initiate an inquiry into the cumulative effects of these domestic deployments of U.S. active-duty troops and the National Guard—over the objections of state and local officials—on military readiness, resources, personnel, and our military as an institution.

Readiness is the cornerstone of our national defense, yet repeated politicized domestic deployments place that readiness at risk. When military and Guard units are pulled away from scheduled training or mission preparation, the consequences extend beyond individual units and erode operational strength across the force, leaving the military less prepared for overseas operations and crisis response. The Guard's unique role as both a state and federal force makes it particularly vulnerable to strain, which could impact the ability of the Guard to protect and save local communities during natural disasters at home.

Service members commit to service with the understanding that their sacrifices will aid communities in times of disaster and defend our nation overseas. They are not trained nor prepared to act as a domestic police force. Assignments in support of politically charged law enforcement operations in Los Angeles; Portland; Washington, DC; Memphis; or Chicago erode trust in leadership and accelerate burnout. Military personnel who feel their service has strayed from its intended purpose may question their continued commitment, compounding the Army and the Guard's already significant retention challenges. At the same time, successfully recruiting new personnel depends on a clear, apolitical mission that honors the history of the active-duty force and the Guard. Associating military service with domestic law enforcement duties—fundamentally contrary to our Constitution—may deter recruits and shrink the pipeline of talent needed to sustain force levels essential to our national security. We cannot afford to drive out servicemembers by normalizing putting them in highly political and fraught conditions, including by forcing troops to confront fellow Americans as opposed to prepare for war, and forcing military officers to navigate unprecedented legal territory and worry about whether they are upholding their oath.

The domestic deployment of military personnel also is a significant waste of resources. The Pentagon initially estimated the deployment of National Guard troops and Marines to Los Angeles to be approximately \$170 million for a 60-day deployment. The Washington, DC, National Guard deployment

is estimated to cost \$2.5 million per day. Many of the Guard units deployed to Washington, DC, to “help restore law and order” are now tasked with “beautification projects” such as picking up trash and spreading mulch. These assignments are a misuse of military personnel and resources, trivialize the professionalism of our service members, and damage morale. Diverting military personnel and defense funds to such missions is inconsistent with the Constitution, congressional intent and responsible stewardship of resources entrusted to the Department of Defense (Department).

These domestic deployments also risk normalizing military involvement in contentious civilian law enforcement, which apart from being deeply contrary to the Constitution, raises serious concerns about the apolitical character of our armed forces and compliance with the *Posse Comitatus Act*. The *Posse Comitatus Act* reflects the founding principle—reflected in the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments—that separating civilian law enforcement from the military protects both individual liberties and states’ rights. Several federal courts have found no credible evidence that the Administration’s use of the military in this way is justified, finding that conditions on the ground have not reached the high threshold of crisis that merits such a militarized response, especially over the objection of local officials. Further, the Trump Administration’s unprecedented deployment of out-of-state Guard personnel into a non-consenting jurisdiction is a significant overreach of executive power.

As such, we request that your office conduct an inquiry into these recent domestic deployments of active-duty and National Guard troops to Los Angeles; Washington, DC; Portland; Chicago; and Memphis. As part of that inquiry, we ask that you provide us with responses to the following:

1. What assessment, if any, did the Department complete to examine whether the domestic deployment of active-duty or National Guard personnel to American cities fully complies with all applicable statutes, including but not limited to 18 U.S.C. § 1385, 10 U.S.C. § 12406, and 32 U.S.C. § 502, and Department directives, instructions, manuals, and other policy guidance?
  - a. Is the Department adhering to its own directives, instructions, manuals, and other policy guidance regarding the permissible scope of support under the applicable statutes?
  - b. Have the interpretations of applicable statutes been applied consistently and in accordance with established legal standards, or have there been deviations from standard practice in these deployments?
2. What assessments, if any, did the Department complete to examine the impact to readiness, resources, personnel, and the Armed Forces as an institution, of the deployment of military personnel to American cities for domestic law enforcement activities?
  - a. How does the Department plan to evaluate the cumulative effects of these prolonged or indefinite domestic deployments on the Guard?
3. To what extent have these deployments disrupted military training schedules, delayed certification or qualification milestones, or otherwise degraded overall readiness for federal missions or overseas operations?

4. How have DoD funds, personnel, and facilities allocated for military readiness and training been redirected to support these domestic deployments of the military for law enforcement activities?
  - a. What specific fund or funds are paying for the deployments of each active-duty or federalized National Guard unit?
  - b. What impact has their diversion had on the Department's ability to fulfil its core defense responsibilities?
5. Please provide a full accounting of DoD equipment and facilities within the United States that has been redirected for support to federal law enforcement since January 20, 2025.
  - a. How have readiness rates of each category of such redirected DoD equipment (e.g., airlift, surveillance equipment) been affected by these diversions?
  - b. How many DoD facilities or installations have been directed to support federal law enforcement and what impact has their diversion had on the installations' or facilities' ability to fulfil their core missions?
6. To what extent have military installations or facilities been used to support the training, staging, or housing of active-duty or National Guard personnel during these deployments, and what impact have these uses had on the day-to-day operations, training schedules, and readiness of those installations?
7. Prior to deployment, what form of legal instruction or training does the Department provide military and Guard personnel regarding the lawful scope of their mission and limitations on their authority while deployed domestically? At what level within the Department are any such decisions about instruction or training made?
  - a. Does any such training or instruction include rules for the use of force, training in de-escalation, training in crowd or protest management, or training in community engagement? Please provide any written materials or documents used to convey this information.
  - b. Does any such training include instruction on the limitations imposed by the *Posse Comitatus Act*? Please provide any written materials or documents used to convey this information.
8. How is the Department ensuring service members operating in U.S. cities are not placed in direct law enforcement roles in violation of law and the *Posse Comitatus Act*?
9. What benchmarks have been established to determine when the deployments will conclude?

- a. Who within the Department is responsible for assessing whether those conditions have been met and authorizing the termination or extension of the mission?
10. What steps, if any, has the Department taken since these deployments began to clarify or strengthen policies preventing military personnel from being used in a civilian law enforcement capacity in American cities?
11. What assessment or review, if any, has the Department completed regarding the legal liability for the Department of deploying military personnel into American cities, including over the objections of state and local leaders, and in instances of out-of-state Guard personnel deployed to a non-consenting jurisdiction?
12. What assessment or review, if any, has the Department completed regarding the potential legal liability for service members who may be placed at risk of violating 18 U.S.C. § 1385?

These deployments place a burden on the military and create national security risks when defense funding and personnel are diverted from their core purpose. We urge your office to examine the matter of these military deployments to Los Angeles; Washington, DC; Portland; Chicago; and Memphis as well as the potential for further deployments to additional American cities, and report your findings to Congress no later than November 21, 2025.

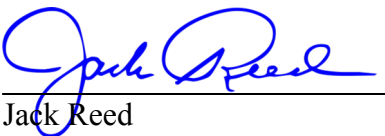
Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator



Jack Reed  
United States Senator



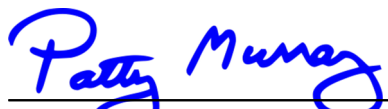
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



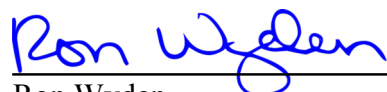
Patty Murray  
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff  
United States Senator



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



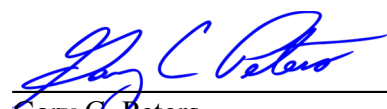
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



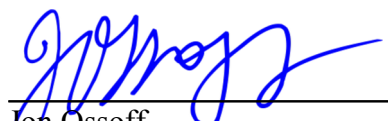
Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks  
United States Senator



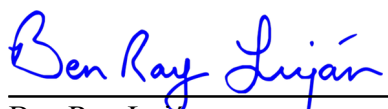
Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



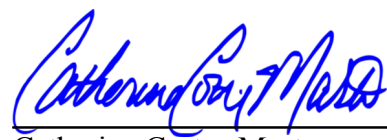
Jon Ossoff  
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



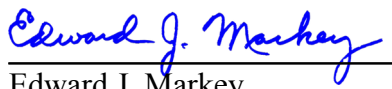
Tina Smith  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Andy Kim  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator