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COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
SOCIAL SECURITY
SELECT REVENUE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4319

September 21, 2020

Attorney General William Barr
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Barr:

Thank you for your leadership during these challenging times. I am grateful for the hard-working men and women at the Justice Department (DOJ) and for your steadfast public service.

As riots continue to erupt in cities across our country, we have witnessed far too many stories of unbridled violence. Police, peaceful protestors, innocent bystanders, and children in Minneapolis, Atlanta, New York City, Portland, Seattle and D.C. have been victimized and even killed by violent rioters.

On June 20th in Seattle's Capitol Hill Organized Protest (CHOP) zone, 19-year-old Horace Lorenzo Anderson Jr., was murdered leaving his father pleading for answers from the City. Instead of being informed by prosecutors and the government in Seattle, Mr. Anderson learned of his son's death from YouTube and friends at the scene.

I am gravely concerned by the number of elected officials who are failing to do their jobs, faithfully execute the law as written, and prosecute these criminal violators.

For example, the District Attorney near Portland, Oregon does not intend to prosecute the hundreds of rioters charged with misdemeanors or felonies committed during violent clashes with law enforcement. Not only will they completely evade our justice system without consequences, law students are working with the DA's office to make sure they know how to expunge their records. These rioters have destroyed the streets, vandalized small businesses still reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic, attacked law enforcement officials, and harmed – sometimes fatally – their fellow citizens, all while local leaders are focusing resources on helping them escape any repercussions.

Every year, Congress appropriates billions of taxpayer dollars to the DOJ with the intention that the funds be distributed to various grant programs that support state and local police, prosecutors, and many others. What we don't know, and need to know, is whether recipients of these taxpayer dollars are refusing to enforce the law against violent rioters destroying our communities.

Therefore, I ask that you provide a detailed list of the total funding given to local prosecutors' offices and police departments in Atlanta, GA; Minneapolis, MN; New York City, NY; Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; Washington, D.C.; and Chicago, IL in 2018 and 2019.

If these cities are not fulfilling their duty to faithfully enforce the law, even as they accept federal dollars, then I question why they should receive any future federal funds, or be eligible to retain those funds, unless and until they agree to uphold the laws of their jurisdictions.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and prompt response to my letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jodey C. Arrington". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jodey C. Arrington