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June 21, 2022

The Honorable Merrick Garland
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I am writing about the recent spate of terroristic threats and acts directed at pro-life organizations around the country.

Many millions of Americans oppose abortion. Some join organizations that advocate for legal change aimed at ending abortion. Others form crisis-pregnancy centers—pro-life groups that provide resources and community to women who become unexpectedly pregnant. Either way, these Americans hope to persuade their fellow citizens to oppose a practice that terminates a life, and to support women and expectant mothers. That is their First Amendment right.

“Since the leak of the draft opinion” overruling *Roe v. Wade*, “charities that support pregnant mothers in need have been firebombed, and pro-life organizations have been attacked almost daily and terrorized.”¹ One report, from June 13, documented attacks involving arson, vandalism, or both against at least 13 pro-life centers across the country.² Another report documents more than 20 attacks on “pregnancy resource centers and offices of pro-life groups.”³ And violent organizations are now *publicly inciting* terroristic acts. One such group—Jane’s Revenge—has claimed credit for attacks in Colorado, Massachusetts, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin.⁴ The same group has declared “open season” on “any anti-choice group” that continues to operate.⁵ And it has called on its members “to paint, to burn, to cut,

¹ Statement of Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan and Archbishop William E. Lori, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (June 13, 2022), <https://perma.cc/T7YW-G4P7>.

² Sarah Westwood, *Violence against anti-abortion movement increases ahead of Dobbs decision*, Washington Examiner (June 13, 2022), <https://perma.cc/DJ8A-NFH2>.

³ *Summer of Rage: Tracking Attacks on Pregnancy Centers & Pro-Life Groups*, Catholic Vote (June 14, 2022), <https://perma.cc/J28C-FUA8>.

⁴ *Jane’s Revenge: Another Communiqué* (June 15, 2022), <https://perma.cc/P6M4-TJPC>.

⁵ *Id.*

[and] to jam” pro-life centers and advocates.⁶ “Through attacking,” it says, its members “find joy, courage, and strip the veneer of impenetrability held by these violent institutions.”⁷

The Department of Justice must investigate and prosecute these terroristic threats and acts. It should start with Jane’s Revenge—the FBI has more than enough resources to determine the organization’s members and to track down those carrying out these acts of violence, which qualify as terrorism under federal law.⁸ And while Jane’s Revenge offers an obvious starting point, the supply of entities deserving to be investigated hardly stops there.

Inaction is intolerable in our nation of laws, and it violates your oath of office. Yet, in recent weeks, you have continued to allow illegal actions seemingly because they advance (in the minds of some) the pro-abortion cause. In particular, you have done nothing to break up picketing outside the homes of Supreme Court justices rumored to have voted to overrule *Roe v. Wade*—this despite the fact that a federal law plainly prohibits such conduct.⁹ And over the past year, the federal government has repeatedly sought leniency for violent criminals motivated by what this Administration perceives as progress.¹⁰ All the while, it has taken bizarrely aggressive positions toward its ideological opponents—for example, parents who speak out at school-board meetings.¹¹ Intentional or not, budding domestic terrorists have apparently received the message: the Department of Justice is going easy on those who use violence in furtherance of favored viewpoints.

This Administration well knows the potential for a “significant increase in violent threats” in the wake of a decision overruling *Roe*.¹² The American people are trusting you to keep them safe. In this country, the federal government’s duty to protect against violence does not turn on the victim’s identity; access to justice cannot turn on partisan affiliation. In America, we solve our differences with debates and ballots, not with bricks and Molotov cocktails. I urge you to thoroughly investigate these acts

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ See 18 U.S.C. §2331.

⁹ 18 U.S.C. §1507.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Danielle Wallace, *Feds seek dramatically reduced sentence for NYC ‘Molotov cocktail lawyers’ in 2020 attack on NYPD vehicle*, Fox News (May 12, 2022), <https://perma.cc/2429-PUNR>; Letter from Senator Tom Cotton to AG Merrick Garland (Feb. 7, 2022), <https://perma.cc/JB9C-6QFN>.

¹¹ Letter from Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita, et al., to Merrick Garland (Oct. 26, 2021), <https://perma.cc/FH67-SHJW>.

¹² Nicole Sganga, “Significant” uptick in abortion-related violent threats after Supreme Court draft opinion leak, DHS warns, CBS News (May 18, 2022), <https://perma.cc/5N9H-XENM> (quotation omitted).

and to ensure that all those who threatened or carried out violence are brought to justice.

I conclude by offering assistance. My office, and the offices of my peer state attorneys general, stand ready to aid in these investigations and prosecutions. Political violence—no matter the cause, and no matter the perpetrator—must be punished, and harshly.

Yours,



Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General



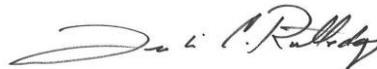
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