

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 2017

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray, Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535-0001

Dear Director Wray,

We write to you to express our deep concerns regarding the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) report dated August 3, 2017, entitled "Black Identity Extremists Likely Motivated to Target Law Enforcement Officers." This intelligence assessment raises several questions that the undersigned membership of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence would like to pursue further in a briefing before our panel.

After careful review of the Bureau's report, we have questions about the legitimacy of the report's designation of "black identity extremists." We believe that the assessment reaches its conclusions based on assumptions which at times are not justified or fully supported by historical data. The findings and assumptions of the report may be influenced by factors other than objective analysis, and the linkages connecting select anecdotal evidence with overly broad conclusions appear to be weak and insubstantial. It is not clear that the concerns or allegations of violence by black activists occurs in a context, or sequence, of response to police violence by local officers against black protesters. This critical context should not be excluded. Introducing the concept of "black identity extremists" is a finding with political, social, and legal repercussions, which must be founded on more than speculative association.

The FBI has a regrettable and troubling history of targeting black political activists and nonviolent civil rights leaders, and mislabeling them as domestic terror threats. Conflating American political activists with violent extremists with no obvious connection or hard evidence harms African Americans, harms the credibility of our law enforcement apparatus, and is an affront to our values as Americans. The misguided targeting of activists and civil rights leaders is also a disservice to the men and women within the law enforcement community and justice system who must trust that the Bureau is relying on rigorous, unbiased analysis.

As you are aware, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) is charged with oversight of the United States Intelligence Community, which includes the FBI. As Members of this Committee, we are committed to ensuring that the FBI is acting responsibly, is faithful to the Constitution, and fair in its provision of justice to the American people. With so many repercussions for law enforcement and the African American

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community, it is critical that no new class of extremist should be created without presenting clear and quantifiable evidence to Congress.

Intelligence assessments that lead to a systematic targeting and profiling of innocent activists deserve our full and immediate attention. We are concerned that the report in question and its underlying analysis is imprecise and will lead to these unintended consequences.

We hope that you will accept our invitation to appear before our Members to discuss the concerns that we have. Please respond in writing by October 30, 2017, so that we can fulfill our oversight duties in a timely manner. Thank you for your prompt attention to this critical matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Terri A. Sewell
Member
House Permanent Select Committee on
Intelligence



André D. Carson
Member
House Permanent Select Committee on
Intelligence

CC:

Devin Nunes
Chairman
House Permanent Select Committee on
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Adam Schiff
Ranking Member
House Permanent Select Committee on
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