

# Letter From Former Senior National Security, Military, and Elected Officials Calling On Congress To Create A Bipartisan 1/6 Commission

Former Nat. Sec., Military, & Elected Officials Apr 6 · 8 min read

Dear Members of Congress,

We are former senior national security, military, and elected officials who have represented or served Democrats, Republicans, or administrations of both parties. We write to encourage this Congress to establish an independent and bipartisan national commission to investigate the January 6th assault of the U.S. Capitol Complex and its direct causes, and to make recommendations to prevent future assaults and strengthen the resilience of our democratic institutions.

We also write to you with great urgency in light of what we collectively see as an exigent and growing threat. The events of January 6th exposed severe vulnerabilities in the nation's preparedness for preventing and responding to domestic terrorist attacks. The immediate security failings that permitted a lethal breach of the Capitol Complex by armed extremists raise serious questions and demand immediate solutions.

But January 6th was also the result of complex national security threats. These include coordinated disinformation campaigns, nontransparent financing of extremist networks, potential foreign influences, and white supremacist violent extremism, which the Department of Homeland Security identified in an October 2020 report as among "the most persistent and lethal threat[s] in the Homeland." As FBI Director Christopher Wray testified to you recently, "January 6th was not an isolated event. The problem of domestic terrorism has been metastasizing across the country for a long time now and it's not going away anytime soon." Understanding how these forces culminated in an attack on the infrastructure of our democracy is critical to preventing future attacks.

In the wake of September 11th, the administration and Congress jointly acknowledged that the attack's causes were complex and that an independent and well-equipped national

commission was an essential tool to aid the federal government. Congressional inquiries, law enforcement activities, and a national commission not only worked in parallel, but critically complemented each other's necessary work. An independent commission should not supplant the ongoing work by the legislative and executive branches, but it can uniquely support them by providing comprehensive and expert recommendations for Congress to act upon.

Commissions — properly empowered, resourced, and led — can establish a full picture of events and an analysis of their causes, from which nonpartisan recommendations can authoritatively flow. With dedicated time, resources, and expert staffing, they can also exclusively focus on the matter at hand over an appropriate time horizon. Given the gravity of January 6th as a national security matter — the violent disruption to the transition of power and the continuing threat of future attacks — a national commission examining the lead up to the January 6th assault, and the attendant security lapses, is not only appropriate, but a critical component of the national response.

A failure to deploy the full suite of tools available to fully understand January 6th and address its causes will leave the Capitol, and the nation, vulnerable to future attacks. In bipartisan fashion, we have successfully marshaled these tools before, and we implore you to do so once again.

Sincerely,

**(Note: All titles are former positions or military ranks held prior to retirement.)**

Javed Ali, Senior Director for Counterterrorism, National Security Council

Thad Allen, Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard; Commandant of the Coast Guard

Wendy R. Anderson, Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of Defense

Daniel Baer, U.S. Ambassador; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

Brian Baird, U.S. Representative, 1999–2011

Daniella Ballou-Aares, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State

Rand Beers, Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Deputy Homeland Security Advisor

John Bellinger, Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State; Legal Advisor, National Security Council

Tatyana Bolton, Cyber Policy Lead — Senior Policy Analyst, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Charles Boustany, U.S. Representative, 2005–2017

Steven Browning, U.S. Ambassador; Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

Todd F. Buchwald, U.S. Ambassador, Office of Global Criminal Justice, U.S. Department of State

Sharon Burke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy

Daniel Byman, Professional Staff Member, 9/11 Commission

Piper Campbell, U.S. Ambassador; Head U.S. Mission to ASEAN

Kevin Carroll, Senior Counselor to the Secretary of Homeland Security; Senior Counsel to the House Homeland Security Committee

J. E. Cartwright, General, U.S. Marine Corps; Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Steven Cash, Chief Counsel, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein; Intelligence Officer, CIA; Assistant District Attorney, New York

Michael Chertoff, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Peter Chiarelli, General, U.S. Army, 32nd Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army

James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence

William Cohen, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense

Tom Coleman, U.S. Representative, 1976–1993

Gary Corn, Colonel, U.S. Army, Staff Judge Advocate, U.S. Cyber Command

Thomas Countryman, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation

Ryan Crocker, U.S. Ambassador

George Croner, Litigation Counsel, National Security Agency; Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice

Carlos Curbelo, U.S. Representative, 2015–2019

John Danforth, U.S. Senator, 1976–1995

J. Michael Daniel, Special Assistant to President Obama and Cybersecurity Coordinator

Tom Daschle, U.S. Senator, 1987–2005

Greg Delawie, U.S. Ambassador

Charles W. Dent, U.S. Representative, 2005–2018

Murray Dickman, Chief of Staff to the Attorney General

David Durenberger, U.S. Senator, 1978–1995

R.P. Eddy, Director, National Security Council; Chief of Staff, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.

Eric Edelman, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Mickey Edwards, U.S. Representative, 1977–1993; Chair, House Republican Policy Committee, 1989–1993

Susan Elliott, U.S. Ambassador

Jeffrey Feltman, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs; U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs

Brenner Fissell, Appellate Counsel, Guantanamo Bay Military Commissions

Emil Frankel, Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, U.S. Department of Transportation

Charles Fried, Solicitor General of the United States

Francis Fukuyama, Deputy Director, Policy Planning, U.S. Department of State

Kim Fuller, U.S. Department of the Army, Director of International Affairs (Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary)

Larry Garber, USAID Mission Director, West Bank/Gaza

Richard Gephardt, U.S. Representative, 1977–2005

Stuart Gerson, Acting Attorney General of the U.S.; Assistant Attorney General; U.S. Air Force Counterintelligence Officer

Glenn Gerstell, General Counsel, National Security Agency

James Glassman, Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Kevin Green, Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy

Nina Hachigian, U.S. Ambassador

Chuck Hagel, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense

Morton Halperin, Director, Policy Planning, U.S. Department of State

Jane Harman, U.S. Representative, 1993–1991, 2001–2011

Gary Hart, U.S. Senator, 1975–1987

Luke Hartig, Senior Director for Counterterrorism, National Security Council

Michael V. Hayden, General, U.S. Air Force; Director, CIA; Director, NSA

Jason Healey, Director, Critical Infrastructure Protection, Homeland Security Council

Margaret Henoch, CIA Senior Intelligence Service

Rush D. Holt, U.S. Representative, 1999–2015

Cameron Hume, U.S. Ambassador

Gordon Humphrey, U.S. Senator, 1979–1991

Paul Douglas Humphries, CIA

Carol Humphries, CIA, Captain, U.S. Navy Reserve

Bob Inglis, U.S. Representative, 1993–1999, 2005–2011

Steve Israel, U.S. Representative, 2001–2017

Jeh Johnson, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Susan Koch, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Threat Reduction Policy

Jim Kolbe, U.S. Representative, 1985–2007

David J. Kramer, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights & Labor

David Laufman, Chief of the Counterintelligence and Export Control Section in the National Security Division, U.S. Department of Justice

J. William Leonard, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Security & Information Operations)

Jason Lewis-Berry, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of State

Andrew Liepman, Deputy Director, National Counterterrorism Center; Deputy Director, CIA/Counterterrorism Center; Director, Office of Iraq Analysis; Deputy Director, Weapons Intelligence Non Proliferation and Arms Control Center

Robert Litt, General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence

George Little, Press Secretary, Pentagon; Spokesman, CIA

James Loy, Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard; Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard; Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Lewis Lukens, U.S. Ambassador

Michael McFaul, Ambassador; Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russian and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council

Steven McGann, U.S. Ambassador

Dennis McGinn, Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy; Assistant Secretary of the Navy

Joseph Medina, Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps

Christopher Mellon, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

Connie Morella, U.S. Representative, 2003–2006; U.S. Ambassador

Janet Napolitano, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Elizabeth Neumann, Assistant Secretary for Counterterrorism and Threat Prevention, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Suzanne Nossel, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

William Owens, Admiral, U.S. Navy; Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Christopher Painter, Coordinator for Cyber Issues, U.S. Department of State

William Perry, Secretary of Defense

Larry Pfeiffer, Chief of Staff, CIA; Senior Director, White House Situation Room

Annie Pforzheimer, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Afghanistan

Randal Phillips, Senior Intelligence Service, CIA

William Piekney, Senior Operations Manager, CIA

Steven Pifer, Senior Foreign Service Officer; U.S. Ambassador

Tony Pipa, Chief Strategy Officer, USAID

Marc Polymeropoulos, Senior Intelligence Service, Directorate of Operations, CIA

Allison Price, Senior Spokesperson, U.S. Department of Justice

Deborah Pryce, U.S. Representative, 1993–2009

Ben Rhodes, Deputy National Security Advisor

Thomas Ridge, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Denver Riggleman, U.S. Representative, 2019–2021

Thomas B. Robertson, U.S. Ambassador

Tim Roemer, 9/11 Commissioner; U.S. Ambassador; U.S. Representative, 1991–2003

Michael Rogers, Admiral, U.S. Navy; Commander, U.S. Cyber Command; Director, National Security Agency

Todd Rosenblum, Deputy Under Secretary of Intelligence, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Paul Rosenzweig, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Nicholas Rostow, Legal Advisor to the National Security Council; Staff Director, U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

Joel Rubin, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

Nilmini Rubin, Director, National Security Council

David Scheffer, U.S. Ambassador

Robert Shanks, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, U.S. Department of Justice; General Counsel, Overseas Private Investment Corporation; General Counsel, Peace Corps



Christopher Shays, U.S. Representative, 1987–2009

Douglas Silliman, U.S. Ambassador

John Sipher, Senior Intelligence Service, CIA Clandestine Service

Peter Smith, U.S. Representative, 1989–1991

Suzanne Spaulding, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Strobe Talbott, Deputy Secretary of State

Miles Taylor, Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Tomicah Tillemann, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State; Speechwriter to the Secretary of State

Kurt Tong, U.S. Ambassador

Olivia Troye, Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Advisor to Vice President Mike Pence

Stanley A. Twardy, Jr., United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, 1985–1991

Alexander Vershbow, NATO Deputy Secretary General; Assistant Secretary of Defense; U.S. Ambassador

Alexander Vindman, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army; Director for European Affairs, National Security Council

Edward Walker, U.S. Ambassador; Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs

James Walsh, U.S. Representative, 1989–2009

Zach Wamp, U.S. Representative, 1995–2011

Thomas Warrick, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Counterterrorism Policy, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

William Wechsler, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Special Operations and Combatting Terrorism

Pamela White, U.S. Ambassador

Christine Todd Whitman, Governor of New Jersey; Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Jonathan Winer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Law Enforcement; Special Envoy for Libya

Tim Wirth, Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs; U.S. Senator, 1987–1993; U.S. Representative, 1975–1987

Lawrence Wilkerson, Colonel, U.S. Army; Chief of Staff, U.S. Secretary of State

Douglas H. Wise, CIA Senior Intelligence Service; Deputy Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

Tamara Cofman Wittes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

Stephen N. Xenakis, Brigadier General, U.S. Army

Marie Yovanovitch, U.S. Ambassador

Dov S. Zakheim, Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)

Peter D. Zimmerman, Chief Scientist, Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Chief Scientific Advisor, US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; Science Advisor for Arms Control, U.S. Department of State