



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

JUN 24 2020

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grijalva:

Thank you for the invitation to testify before your Committee at an oversight hearing regarding the June 1, 2020, interactions between protesters and law enforcement at Lafayette Square Park. Your invitation has been extended to the Assistant Chief of the United States Park Police, Gregory T. Monahan.

Assistant Chief Monahan would like to accept your request to appear before the Committee to present the facts that occurred on the ground that evening. However, because of the ongoing protests and accompanying violence and destruction of memorials and monuments by some individuals, the United States Park Police must currently continue in its highest operational status. As you are aware, just two nights ago another "peaceful protest" led to more violence and destruction in the park.

For this reason, Assistant Chief Monahan offers to appear before your Committee after these activities and actions have subsided. At this point, we suggest mid- to late July.

We expect, for this potential hearing, as we would for any hearing involving Departmental personnel, that the Committee adhere to the long-recognized principle of seating Executive Branch witnesses on their own panel, both as a matter of respect for a co-equal branch of government and recognizing the sensitive nature of law enforcement matters being discussed.

In addition, as Assistant Chief Monahan has been named as a party in certain lawsuits pertaining to the lawful performance of his official duties on June 1, 2020, there are legal interests which will necessarily frame the discussion of the events of that day. This discussion would be further constrained, if not completely circumvented in its entirety, were an adverse party to such a lawsuit also asked to testify at that same hearing.

We look forward to working with the Committee on this issue.

Sincerely,

Cole Rojewski
Director
Office of Congressional and
Legislative Affairs

cc: The Honorable Rob Bishop
Ranking Member