

GIFFORDS

February 27, 2025

Gabrielle Giffords
Tucson, Arizona

Mr. Kashyap Patel, Director
FBI Headquarters
J. Edgar Hoover Building
935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Mr. Patel,

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) are important agencies charged with protecting Americans from violent crime and domestic terrorism. As you now lead them both, I write with some advice and one simple request.

I understand that the pressure you face in these dual roles is immense. As the Senate-confirmed leader of the agency that oversees all background checks ahead of firearms purchases (FBI), and now the acting leader of the agency that investigates firearms crimes (ATF), the amount and severity of gun crime in America is largely in your hands. It is a heavy burden. Americans will look to you to keep their streets, schools, and neighborhoods safe. By accepting both roles, you accept that responsibility. Despite our policy disagreements, I hope you succeed. Please know that I will do everything in my power to help you save lives.

After President Trump's first administration, your rhetoric appealed to the base of one political party. My advice to you: leave that behind. The time for playing to a faction of our country is over. Countless lives depend on your choice to rise above Washington's partisan noise and competently lead tens of thousands of public servants, whose charge is fighting crime. In your two jobs, putting "America First" requires letting others handle the politics. Any official who occupies these two critical positions has a patriotic duty to place public safety above all else.

Important positions such as yours leave long legacies. It is my sincere hope for you that decades from now, you and your family will look back on your tenure with pride at the lives you helped save. If that positive legacy is what you desire, failure—playing politics while guns remain the leading cause of death for American children and teenagers—is not an option.

Lastly, I write to request a private meeting—not only with me, but with a small group of gun violence survivors. Just as any responsible FEMA administrator devotes time to meet with victims of hurricanes and tornados or any Secretary of Defense will meet with the families of fallen troops, the leader of the ATF and FBI has a duty to hear directly from those who have been shot, or lost their children and family members. Hearing firsthand from the Americans you swore to protect can only help you fulfill your responsibilities. Such meetings are often heavy—but they are necessary for anyone sitting in your position. That’s the job you have.

I look forward to hearing from you.

God Bless America,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two stylized, cursive letters 'g' and 'g' written side-by-side.

Gabrielle Giffords