

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 14, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
Office of the Attorney General
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write to request that the Criminal Section of the U.S Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division investigate a December 5, 2020 incident that appears to involve law enforcement misconduct, including the apparent use of excessive force, against Lieutenant Caron Nazario, an active duty United States Army Officer serving with the U.S. Army Medical Corps.

This incident is of national interest given the widespread condemnation and outrage that emerged throughout the country following the release of video footage documenting what appears to be clear law enforcement misconduct, excessive force and an outrageous and offensive threat of violence that may have been motivated by bias based on a statutorily-protected characteristic.

Furthermore, given the alarming nature of the video evidence documenting brazenly violent and disrespectful treatment of an Army Officer wearing his uniform, it is logical to infer that this incident may be indicative of widespread law enforcement misconduct by members of the Windsor Police Department.

Accordingly, I also request that the DOJ Civil Rights Division examine whether a “pattern-or-practice” investigation must be conducted to determine whether the December 5, 2020 incident was a result of systemic deficiencies and a persistent pattern of misconduct by law enforcement officers employed by the Windsor Police Department. The DOJ Civil Rights Division has noted in regard to “pattern-or-practice” investigations that “The Division has worked in departments as small as six officers and as large as 17,000.”

Thus, the small size of the Windsor Police Department should not preclude the DOJ Civil Rights Division from conducting a full “pattern-or-practice” investigation to determine whether the actions of the two officers on the night of December 5, 2020 reflect a broader pattern or practice of members of the Windsor Police Department to engage in stops, searches, or arrests that violate the Fourth Amendment; use excessive force; conduct discriminatory policing and violate the constitutional rights of criminal suspects.

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Just like Lieutenant Nazario, you and I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Fulfilling this oath requires holding the Windsor Police Department officers accountable who deprived Lieutenant Nazario of his civil rights and liberties that are guaranteed under the Constitution. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammy Duckworth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator