

Prepared Opening Statement by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa  
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee  
“Oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation”  
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This committee has a constitutional obligation to ensure that the FBI complies with the laws we write and executes them according to our intent.

In the performance of our constitutional duties, we seek answers and records from the FBI. And, if Congress finds potential wrongdoing, we have an obligation to the American people to make it public.

The public’s business ought to be public. Transparency brings accountability.

Just last week, the Justice Department failed yet again to be transparent. The Department failed to provide underlying information to support their assumption that a jury wouldn’t convict FBI agents for botching the Nassar investigation. This is beyond unacceptable.

I’ve also asked the FBI about the steps it’s taken to investigate Afghan evacuees that are considered significant security concerns. Senators Portman and Inhofe have done the same. The FBI won’t even tell Congress which field offices are responsible for those security matters. How does that make our communities safer?

Furthermore, based on the killing of Al-Qaeda’s leader this week, it appears that terrorist group is still using Afghanistan as many of us, including Director Wray, have feared. The FBI must provide Congress concrete information about the national security and criminal risks that our communities may face with respect to evacuees that weren’t vetted properly.

As we all see, violence is a major problem in America today, with rates of violent crime skyrocketing across the country. The start of this violent crime wave began in 2020 as police nationwide were pulled off the streets. Some of the main causes of this rise in violent crime are anti-police rhetoric and de-policing efforts, progressive prosecution and bail reform.

This crisis in policing is happening at the same time that progressive prosecutors refuse to hold violent criminals accountable for their crimes. Witness after witness in this committee has told us the bail reform movement helps to release violent criminals who are arrested so they can go commit more crimes. Congress must treat violent crime as a top priority.

Last week, I introduced the *Combating Violent and Dangerous Crime Act*. The bill contains commonsense proposals to reduce the spike in violent crime in the nation; proposals that would expand federal prosecution options for offenses like murder, carjacking, bank robbery and assault on police officers.

The Justice Department and FBI must also make violent crime a top priority. However, instead of doing so, the Biden Justice Department and FBI have focused on intimidating parents who are

concerned about how schools treat their children. For example, it's been reported that the FBI has labeled parents with threat tags to track and investigate them.

Contributing to the crime wave, this administration's failure to manage the border has been a drug trafficker's dream. The result? In 2021, we had over 100,000 drug overdoses.

Thanks to our open border, drug traffickers are poisoning our streets and killing our children. And they're trafficking innocent victims with reckless abandon. This administration is failing the people by not securing our southern border.

Political bias has also infected the FBI's decision-making process. As Director Wray aware, multiple Justice Department whistleblowers have approached my office about that political bias. *They are patriots. They've got guts.*

According to whistleblowers, the FBI opened an investigation on the Trump campaign and its advisors. The opening memo for this investigation is based in substantial part on liberal news reporting. It's also based on information derived from a left-wing nonprofit. Based on allegations, Director Wray and Attorney General Garland reviewed the memo and approved a full investigation.

Now, as I've said in my letter, if the FBI is going to open an investigation you have to do it the right way. It appears the right way wasn't done. So, let's contrast this investigation with what the FBI has done with allegedly criminal information received from numerous sources relating to [Hunter Biden](#).

Simply put, the FBI shut matters down. In August 2020, an FBI Supervisory Intelligence Analyst opened an assessment. This August 2020 assessment served as the vehicle by which an FBI Headquarters team falsely labeled Hunter Biden information as disinformation. As just one example to make my concerns clear, in October 2020, an avenue of reporting on Hunter Biden was ordered closed. That Hunter Biden information related to potential criminal activity.

According to whistleblowers, the reporting was either verified or verifiable via criminal search warrants. But, it was shut down on the basis of it being at risk of disinformation. Based on allegations, the evidence didn't support that finding.

So, let's look at both these fact patterns. On the one hand, the FBI greenlit a full investigation into Trump based on liberal news articles and information derived from a liberal nonprofit. On the other hand, the FBI closed investigative activity and sources that provided verified and verifiable reporting on Hunter Biden.

Director Wray will have to explain to the committee – and the country – how he'll manage this mess and clean house.

In conclusion, I'm going to make one last point. In August 2020, Senator Johnson and I received an unsolicited and unnecessary briefing from the FBI. It purportedly related to our Biden investigation but it had nothing to do with it.

The briefing was done after the FBI received pressure from my Democratic colleagues to do it. The contents of that briefing were later leaked in order to falsely paint our investigation as advancing Russian disinformation. That briefing was held the same month the FBI opened the assessment that was used to label Hunter Biden information as disinformation.

The timing of these events draws serious concern. Director Wray, simply put, the FBI's credibility is on the line, as are the principles that helped found and sustain our great nation.