

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 8, 2026

Todd W. Blanche
Attorney General
Department of Justice
905 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Attorney General Blanche and Director Patel,

We are extremely alarmed by reports of Black people found hanging from trees in numerous states throughout our country. The series of deaths raise significant suspicion of foul play given the role of lynching in our nation's history. Therefore, we write to urgently demand a thorough, transparent, and comprehensive federal investigation into every hanging death of a Black individual across the United States.

The growing number of Black people found hanging in public is a national crisis. A recent report documented more than 70 modern-day lynchings in the United States between 2000 and 2025.¹ In 2026 alone, there have already been at least 10 reported hangings of Black people. They were as young as 18 years old and lived in different parts of the country, including Mississippi, Michigan, and New York.² Each of their deaths should be treated with the utmost seriousness and investigated without bias by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

We know there is a long history of neglecting to prevent or investigate deaths of Black individuals. For decades, the DOJ and FBI ignored widespread lynchings which motivated more killings.³ Inaction by the federal government is tantamount to complicity. This is part of the legacy of racial terror in the United States, and this neglect has long-term consequences.⁴ Not

¹ A Crimson Record: Seven State Modern-Day Lynching (MDL) Report, 2000-2025, JULIAN (Feb. 18, 2026) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1twIekbOTlto0wEtY0uAL_0IW__VV1Ity/view.

² Found Hanging: Black Deaths, Unanswered Questions and an American Terror that Refuses to Stay in the Past, WASHINGTON INFORMER (Aug. 27, 2026), <https://www.washingtoninformer.com/modern-lynching-suspicious-black-deaths/>; Black father of nine found hanging in North Carolina as police say 'everything is on the table', THE GRIO (Aug. 26, 2026), <https://thegrio.com/2026/08/26/demetrius-fleming-roanoke-rapids-death-investigation/>.

³ Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project, NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW (2026), <https://crrj.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CRRJ-2025-end-of-year-report.pdf>.

⁴ Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror, EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE (2017), <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>.

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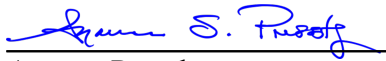
only are innocent lives lost, but lynching inflicts deep traumatic and psychological wounds on family members, neighbors, and the entire Black community.

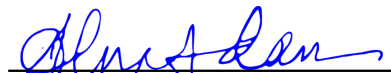
Congress enacted the *Emmett Till Antilynching Act* in 2022 to ensure the DOJ and FBI are empowered to fully investigate suspicious deaths and hold individuals accountable. It is incumbent upon you to do just that. At a minimum, each federal investigation, with permission of the decedents' families, should include an independent autopsy, an audit of local and state law enforcement investigations, review of physical and testimonial evidence, and a final report submitted to Congress explaining the agency's findings. Additionally, there must be robust data collection that tracks the hanging deaths of Black people in a transparent and systematic manner.

We would appreciate the opportunity for our offices to connect with your teams at regular, scheduled intervals to share updates, feedback, and concerns from the broader community, as appropriate.

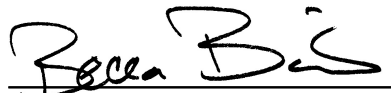
Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

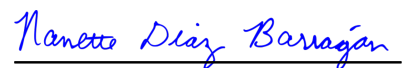
Sincerely,


Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

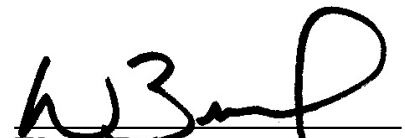

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress


Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress

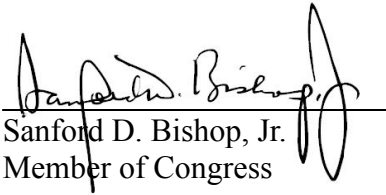

Becca Balint
Member of Congress


Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress


Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress


Wesley Bell
Member of Congress

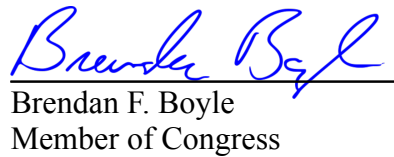
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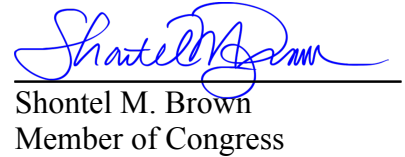
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



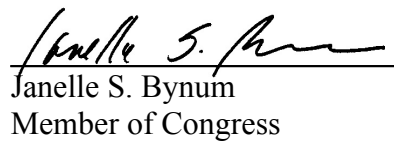
Everton Blair Jr.
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



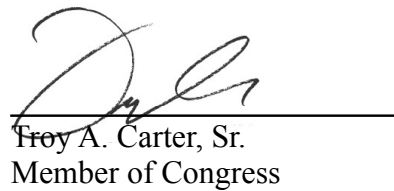
Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



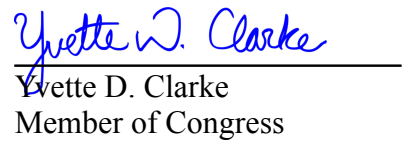
Janelle S. Bynum
Member of Congress



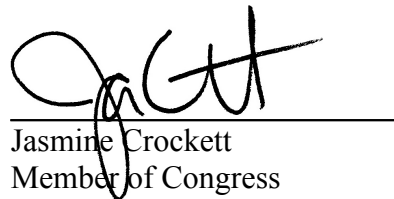
André Carson
Member of Congress



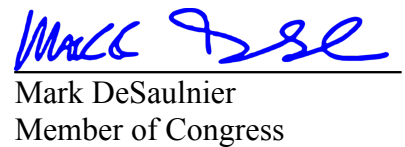
Froy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



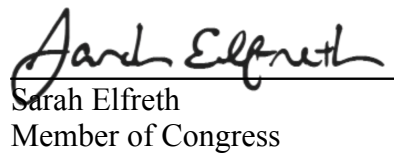
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



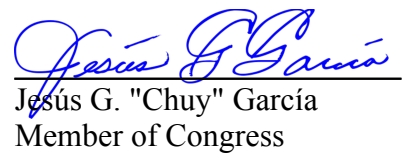
Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



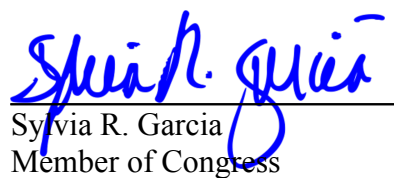
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



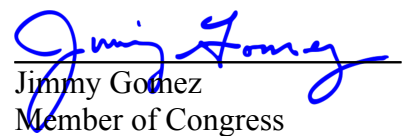
Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

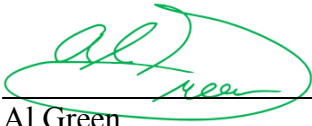


Sylvia R. García
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

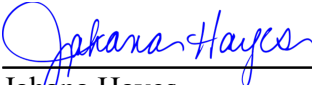
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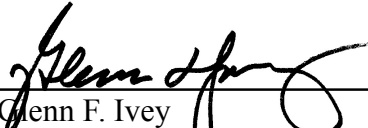
Al Green
Member of Congress



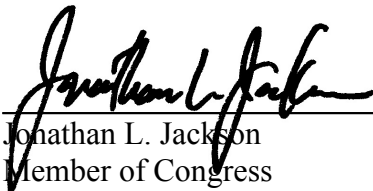
Adelita S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



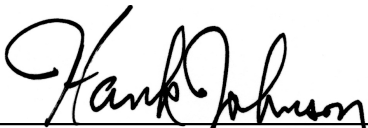
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



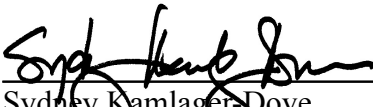
Glenn F. Ivey
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



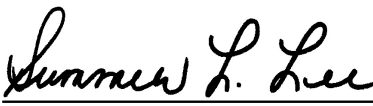
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



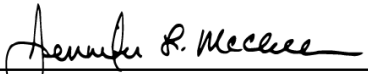
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



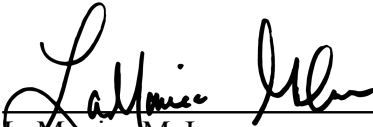
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress

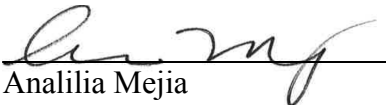


LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress

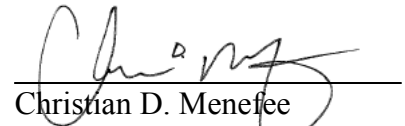


Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

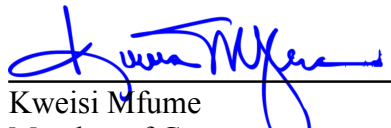
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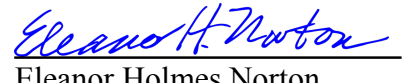
Analilia Mejia
Member of Congress



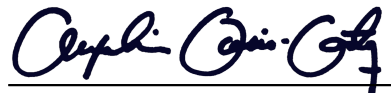
Christian D. Menefee
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



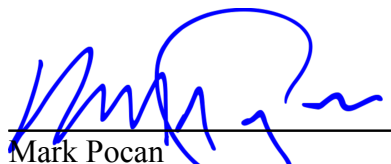
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



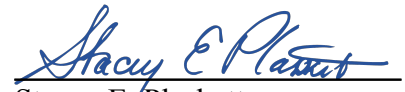
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



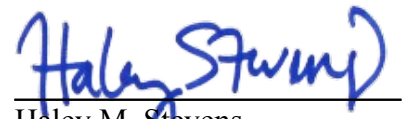
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



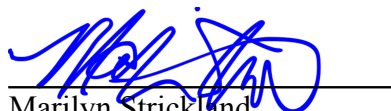
Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

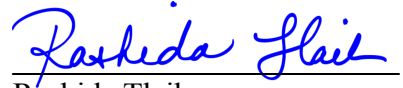


Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress

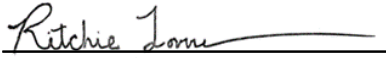
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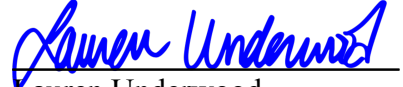
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



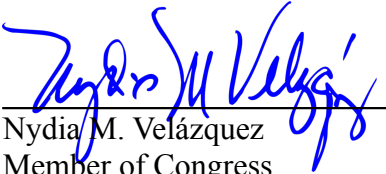
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



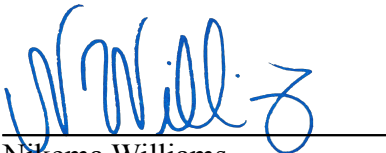
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress