

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 7, 2025

The Honorable Merrick Garland
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

I write to express my deep concern with your department's attempted last-minute takeover of a dozen police departments across the country using federal consent decrees.

According to *The Washington Post*, your department has opened "pattern or practice" investigations into twelve state and local law-enforcement agencies in a rush to gain federal control of these agencies before President Biden leaves office.

No police department—like any human institution—is without flaw, but federal consent decrees have a well-established and atrocious record of increasing crime and endangering law-abiding citizens. Violent crime has surged in seven out of twelve cities that entered federal consent decrees since 2012. For instance, violent crime soared by 61 percent in Los Angeles County, 36 percent in Albuquerque, 27 percent in Seattle, 20 percent in New Orleans, and 19 percent in Maricopa County.

Your department is reportedly nearest to entering consent decrees with Minneapolis and Louisville, where murders have already reached record highs in recent years. The last thing these cities need is unqualified defund-the-police radicals like Kristen Clarke micromanaging their police departments for the next ten years.

Crime has risen during the Biden administration and your tenure as Attorney General. We should be arresting, prosecuting, and incarcerating criminals—not handcuffing our police. I object to your efforts to perpetuate this administration's failed policies. I urge you to drop these midnight lawsuits and let the new administration get about the business of protecting Americans from violent criminals.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator