

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 12th, 2024

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20535

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20451

Dear Director Wray, Secretary Mayorkas, and Secretary Blinken,

I write to you with grave concern as a member of both the House Oversight Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs and the House Homeland Security Committee, as well as a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community.

Over the last several weeks, your respective agencies and departments have issued stark warnings and travel advisories to the public over potential threats from Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO) and their supporters during this year's Pride Month. I understand that these steps have come after deeply concerning increases in anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, calls for targeted violence, and foiled violent plots.¹

Ensuring that people can peacefully and safely celebrate Pride and the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community is of utmost importance. Last year, the New York City Pride March alone drew 75,000 participants and approximately two million spectators. It is also crucial to recognize that the celebration of Pride takes place all across the globe—with over 100 countries holding Pride events last year—and is not confined to the month of June. In fact, Pride events take place over the course of many months—stretching into October—and our law enforcement agencies must stay vigilant throughout the entire period.

As you know, this week marks the eight anniversary of the horrific Pulse Nightclub Orlando shooting – during which the attacker deliberately and viciously targeted the LGBTQ+ community and took 49 lives, injuring an additional 53 people. It is important to put the recent escalation of extremist anti-LGBTQ+ propaganda and messaging in the context the Pulse

¹ Foreign terrorist organizations and their supporters likely heighten threat environment during 2024 Pride Month. (2024, May 10). <https://www.ic3.gov/Media/Y2024/PSA240510>

Nightclub shooter who was influenced by these same forces of extremism.² I sincerely appreciate the work each of you and your departments are doing to prevent hate-filled violence, both here at home and abroad, from happening again.

I urge you to take all necessary steps and precautions and to continue to monitor potential threats ensuring cooperation with state and local officials, both in the U.S. and abroad. I also ask that you continue to prioritize combatting domestic extremism more broadly—the forces of which we know are on the rise globally—and that you continue to provide Congress with information on these efforts, and on the evolving nature of the threat.

Within my role on both the House Oversight and Homeland Security Committees, I am eager to partner with you on these serious matters and assist however I can in your efforts to keep all Americans safe during this Pride Month and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Garcia", written in a cursive style.

Robert Garcia
Member of Congress

² Norman, D. (2024, May 21). *What's behind the security warnings for pride events*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/21/travel/pride-month-parade-security.html>