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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

November 29, 2016

The Honorable Loretta Lynch
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Lynch,

I write to share my concerns related to the ongoing protests of the Dakota Access Pipeline by the Standing Rock Tribe and its supporters. I am alarmed by the increasingly aggressive tactics being deployed against protestors including the use of armed vehicles, rubber bullets, and even water cannons in freezing temperatures. One media account noted that over 100 protestors were recently injured and other accounts have even higher numbers including one demonstrator who may have lost her arm according to credible media reports.

As you know, the federal government is currently examining concerns raised by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe about potential pipeline impacts on environmental and tribal resources. Many have joined the tribe to peacefully protest in North Dakota in the meantime.

The disturbing reports and images of actions taken against protestors for exercising such a basic right raise troubling memories of the terrible tactics used during the turbulent struggle for civil rights equality in our country. I urge you to step in and work with state and local authorities to quickly de-escalate the situation, while ensuring that peaceful protestors can freely exercise those rights without fear.

I cannot overemphasize the need for you to do everything in your power to work with both sides to ensure the situation does not get worse. Law enforcement should be able to do maintain order without violence and without violating the rights of tribal members and other peaceful protestors. The Justice Department must help restore calm and ease tensions.

Please act to ease tensions, restore order, and make clear that violence against peaceful protestors or against law enforcement officials should not be tolerated. Thank you for your timely consideration and response to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gwen Moore".

Gwen Moore
MEMBER OF CONGRESS