

# U.S. Sen. Johnson: Joins Sen. Moran, colleagues in demanding answers from DOJ on efforts to protect pro-life groups from violence

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**WASHINGTON** – On Tuesday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) joined U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) and 14 of their Republican colleagues in a letter calling on U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland to investigate and work to prevent violence against pro-life organizations. After a draft opinion in the Supreme Court case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* was leaked to the media, pro-life and religious organizations have been increasingly vandalized and damaged, including the politically-motivated attack on the Wisconsin Family Action office in Madison, Wisconsin.

In [May 2022](#), Sen. Johnson sent a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray, and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas asking why the attack on the Wisconsin Family Action office has not been labeled “domestic terrorism.” Jane’s Revenge, a pro-abortion group, threw two Molotov cocktails into the Wisconsin Family Action office and painted “if abortions aren’t safe then you aren’t either” on their building. Following the attack, President Biden made no public remarks and refused to condemn the attack. To date, DOJ, FBI and DHS have yet to respond to Sen. Johnson’s letter.

“We are deeply concerned that this trend will continue should the Supreme Court overturn *Roe v. Wade* in the coming weeks unless the Department of Justice, the FBI, and U.S. Attorneys’ Offices take a firm public stance and proactive response against these violent threats,” **the senators wrote.**

“The criminal acts perpetrated against those who oppose legalized abortion are a clear effort to intimidate or coerce individuals who hold pro-life values. We call on the Department of Justice to take these actions seriously and work to prevent violence and, when such acts are perpetrated, investigate and prosecute them as appropriate,” **the senators continued.**

Sens. Johnson and Jerry Moran were joined on the letter by Senators Steve Daines (Mont.), Roger Wicker (Miss.), Roger Marshall (Kan.), Mike Crapo (Idaho), John Boozman (Ark.), Deb Fischer (Neb.), Joni Ernst (Iowa), James Risch (Idaho), Jim Inhofe (Okla.), Ted Cruz (Texas), John Thune (S.D.), Cindy Hyde-Smith (Miss.), James Lankford (Okla.) and Mike Braun (Ind.).

The full letter can be found [here](#) or below.

June 7, 2022

The Honorable Merrick Garland

Attorney General

U.S. Department of Justice

Dear Attorney General Garland:

We write to request information about how the Department of Justice is addressing the disturbing trend of harassment, intimidation, and violence against religious and other pro-life organizations and individuals in the aftermath of the leaked draft opinion in the Supreme Court case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*. While churches and crisis pregnancy centers have been vandalized, pro-life offices in Oregon and Wisconsin have been targeted by arsonists. We are deeply concerned that this trend will continue should the Supreme Court overturn *Roe v. Wade* in the coming weeks unless the Department of Justice, the FBI, and U.S. Attorneys’ Offices take a firm public stance and proactive response against these violent threats.

Last October, the Department of Justice wasted no time in publicly responding to

threats of violence against educators and school administrators related to COVID-19 policies. You issued a memo in which you stated, “While spirited debate about policy matters is protected under our Constitution, that protection does not extend to threats of violence or efforts to intimidate individuals based on their views.” At the same time, the Department created specialized training and guidance for local school boards and school administrators to help “potential victims understand the type of behavior that constitutes threats, how to report threatening conduct to the appropriate law enforcement agencies, and how to capture and preserve evidence of threatening conduct to aid in the investigation and prosecution of these crimes.” The Department also took steps to improve coordination between the FBI, the U.S. Attorneys’ Offices, and local law enforcement to “open dedicated lines of communication for threat reporting, assessment, and response.”

Yet in comparison to the current climate, in which multiple acts—not just threats—of violence have been documented, we have not seen the commensurate public response from the Department of Justice that the moment demands. The criminal acts perpetrated against those who oppose legalized abortion are a clear effort to intimidate or coerce individuals who hold pro-life values. We call on the Department of Justice to take these actions seriously and work to prevent violence and, when such acts are perpetrated, investigate and prosecute them as appropriate.

We are dismayed that the open and public urgency with which the Department of Justice undertook efforts in the name of public safety last year is not being replicated currently to protect religious and other pro-life organizations and individuals. We seek answers to the following questions:

1. What is the Department of Justice’s strategy to prevent violence and threats of violence against private organizations and individuals who oppose legalized abortion?
2. What resources does the Department of Justice need to publicize and implement this strategy successfully?
3. What role has the Department of Justice played in investigating and prosecuting individuals committing violence against pro-life organizations and individuals?

The Supreme Court’s ruling in Dobbs is imminent, and thus we ask for a response

to these questions by June 10, 2022. Thank you for your service to our country and your attention to this important matter