

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 16, 2025

The Honorable Pamela J. Bondi  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Todd Blanche  
Deputy Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi and Deputy Attorney General Blanche:

We write to express serious concerns about a troubling pattern at the Department of Justice (“DOJ” or the “Department”): repeated interventions or dismissals in cases involving Mr. Bradley (“Brad”) Bondi—Attorney General Pam Bondi’s brother—that consistently favor his clients. Taken together with the Department’s August dismissal of several other cases involving defendants represented by Mr. Bondi, these actions call into question whether DOJ (1) has properly implemented firewalls and screening procedures to separate Attorney General Bondi from her brother and (2) is refraining from involvement in cases where its impartiality may reasonably be questioned. These concerns are further heightened by the administration’s removal in March 2025 of DOJ’s Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) Director Jeffrey Ragsdale, who served as the Department’s senior official responsible for reviewing allegations of professional misconduct. Such a leadership change, particularly during a period in which the Department has taken several unusual actions that appear to benefit Mr. Bondi, underscores the importance of ensuring that DOJ’s internal accountability mechanisms remain fully independent and active.

To illustrate this troubling pattern, we begin with the most recent incident involving DOJ’s abrupt and unexpected intervention in recent Hawai‘i litigation. In August 2025, Cruise Lines International Association filed suit against the Hawai‘i Department of Taxation and the State of Hawai‘i in opposition to Hawai‘i Act 96, which would establish an 11% state surcharge and 3% county fees on cruise fares for vessels docking in Hawai‘i.<sup>1</sup> One of the plaintiff’s attorneys is Mr. Bondi.<sup>2</sup> DOJ, not an original party to the case, took the surprising step of intervening, essentially on behalf of Mr. Bondi’s client. Specifically, in the late hours of November 13, 2025, DOJ abruptly filed a motion to intervene—right before a scheduled hearing the next day whether to dismiss the case, which the court granted, potentially altering the course of the proceedings.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Cruise Lines Int’l Ass’n, Inc. v. Sukanuma*, No. 1:25-cv-00367-JAO-KJM (D. Haw. Oct. 6, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> *Cruise Lines Int’l Ass’n, Inc. v. Sukanuma*, No. 1:25-cv-00367-JAO-KJM, Pls.’ Mem. Opp’n Defs.’ Mot. Dismiss Compl., ECF No. 56 (D. Haw. Oct. 6, 2025).

<sup>3</sup> *Cruise Lines Int’l Ass’n, Inc. v. Sukanuma*, No. 1:25-cv-00367-JAO-KJM, Mem. Supp. Mot. Intervene, ECF No. 69-1 (D. Haw. Nov. 13, 2025); *Cruise Lines Int’l Ass’n, Inc. v. Sukanuma*, No. 1:25-cv-00367-JAO-KJM, Order Granting the United States of America’s Mot. Intervene, ECF No. 90 (D. Haw. Dec. 4, 2025); Jeremy Yurow, *Hawai‘i faces constitutional showdown over climate tax on cruise ships*, COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE (Nov. 14, 2025), <https://www.courthousenews.com/hawaii-faces-constitutional-showdown-over-climate-tax-on-cruise-ships/#:~:text=Fujii%20responded%20that%20economic%20forces,the%20federal%20government's%20intervention>

This latest intervention is particularly concerning when viewed alongside DOJ’s earlier dismissals of two criminal cases against Mr. Bondi’s clients. On January 17, 2025, DOJ charged Ms. Carolina Amesty, a former Florida State Representative, with two counts of theft of government property, alleging that she fraudulently obtained \$122,000 worth of small-business loans during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>4</sup> These charges carried a potential 20-year prison sentence.<sup>5</sup> Fortunately for Ms. Amesty, she had retained Mr. Bondi in December 2024. Although DOJ entered into “active discussions” with Mr. Bondi two weeks after President Trump took office, the government repeatedly sought delays and extensions—prompting the judge assigned to the case to remark that the parties had already been given sufficient time to resolve their issues—before abruptly ending its criminal investigation and declining to seek an indictment.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, in September 2024, DOJ charged Mr. Sidarth Chakraverty, a property developer, with 11 counts of wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.<sup>7</sup> Mr. Chakraverty, who had retained Mr. Bondi in July 2025, likewise saw his charges abruptly dismissed, even though just weeks earlier multiple DOJ career prosecutors, as well as President Trump-appointed interim United States Attorney Thomas Albus, reportedly believed that criminal penalties were warranted.<sup>8</sup>

Notably, the favorable outcomes obtained by Mr. Bondi’s clients appear to extend beyond DOJ dismissals. Mr. Bondi served as lead attorney for Mr. Trevor Milton, a Utah billionaire who was convicted in 2022 on federal securities fraud and wire fraud charges.<sup>9</sup> Yet, President Trump

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[%20motion.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Press Release, U.S. Dep’t of Just., *Windermere Woman Charged with COVID Relief Fraud* (Jan. 17, 2025), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mdfl/pr/windermere-woman-charged-covid-relief-fraud>; Gabrielle Russon, *Amnesty for Carolina Amesty: Feds won’t pursue criminal case over COVID loans, defense lawyer says*, FLORIDA POLITICS (Aug. 6, 2025), <https://floridapolitics.com/archives/750470-amnesty-for-carolina-amesty-feds-wont-pursue-criminal-case-over-covid-loans-defense-lawyer-says/>.

<sup>5</sup> Olivia Rubin, Alexander Mallin, and Lucien Bruggeman, *A woman accused of fraud hired the AG’s brother as her lawyer. Months later, DOJ dropped charges*, ABC NEWS (Aug. 7, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/US/woman-accused-fraud-hired-ags-brother-lawyer-months/story?id=124429973>.

<sup>6</sup> Olivia Rubin, Alexander Mallin, and Lucien Bruggeman, *A woman accused of fraud hired the AG’s brother as her lawyer. Months later, DOJ dropped charges*, ABC NEWS (Aug. 7, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/US/woman-accused-fraud-hired-ags-brother-lawyer-months/story?id=124429973>; Gabrielle Russon, *Amnesty for Carolina Amesty: Feds won’t pursue criminal case over COVID loans, defense lawyer says*, FLORIDA POLITICS (Aug. 6, 2025), <https://floridapolitics.com/archives/750470-amnesty-for-carolina-amesty-feds-wont-pursue-criminal-case-over-covid-loans-defense-lawyer-says/>.

<sup>7</sup> Press Release, U.S. Dep’t of Just., *Operators of Lux Living and Big Sur Construction and Chief Accountant Indicted on Wire Fraud Charges Involving Apartment Developments* (Sept. 20, 2024), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-edmo/pr/operators-lux-living-and-big-sur-construction-and-chief-accountant-indicted-wire-fraud>.

<sup>8</sup> Olivia Rubin, Alexander Mallin, and Lucien Bruggeman, *DOJ drops charges against another client of AG Pam Bondi’s brother Brad*, ABC NEWS (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/US/doj-drops-charges-client-ag-pam-bondis-brother/story?id=125073335>; Ben Penn, *DOJ Drops Another Fraud Case For a Client of Bondi’s Brother (I)*, BLOOMBERG LAW (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/doj-drops-another-fraud-case-against-a-client-of-bondis-brother>.

<sup>9</sup> Sam Arman, *Brad Bondi’s Leading Litigation and White Collar & Investigations Practice in Washington*, LAWDRAGON (Nov. 13, 2024), <https://www.lawdragon.com/lawyer-limelights/2024-11-13-brad-bondi-leading-litigation-and-white-collar-investigations-practice-in-washington>; Kevin Liptak, *Trump explains pardon of Utah billionaire Trevor Milton who was convicted of fraud*, FOX13 NOW (Apr. 1, 2025), <https://www.fox13now.com/news/local-news/trump-explains-pardon-of-utah-billionaire-trevor-milton-who-was-convicted-of-fraud>.

gave Mr. Milton a full and unconditional pardon on March 27, 2025.<sup>10</sup> This pardon not only allowed Mr. Milton to avoid his four-year prison sentence, but also relieved him of court-ordered restitution to shareholders harmed by his fraudulent conduct.<sup>11</sup> Even when Mr. Bondi loses, he apparently wins.

Viewed collectively, these actions raise significant broader ethical concerns. The repetition and timing of these interventions suggest coordinated decision-making rather than routine prosecutorial discretion. Such departures from standard DOJ practice—including those required by the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) and incorporated by reference in DOJ *Justice Manual*—raise serious questions about whether impartiality has been compromised and whether internal safeguards are being bypassed. Under 5 C.F.R. § 2635.101, federal employees must “act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.”<sup>12</sup> Additionally, under 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502, federal employees with a “covered relationship” whose impartiality could reasonably be questioned must not participate in the matter absent an independent agency determination.<sup>13</sup> The DOJ *Justice Manual* incorporates these same federal ethics standards and also mandates that DOJ employees report allegations of misconduct by DOJ personnel to OPR or to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG).<sup>14</sup>

For these reasons, and without commenting on the underlying merits of any case, we are compelled to seek clarity on what appears to be an improper pattern of favorable DOJ actions on behalf of the Attorney General’s brother. As such, we require answers to the below questions no later than **January 2, 2026**:

1. Please produce all documents, communications, memoranda, or ethics evaluations reflecting any consideration, discussion, or implementation of a recusal or screening arrangement (“firewall”) related to Attorney General Bondi and any matter involving her brother, Mr. Bondi.
2. Please state whether DOJ instituted any recusal, firewall, or screening procedures pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502 in any matter involving Mr. Bradley Bondi, and provide DOJ’s justification for instituting or not instituting such procedures.
3. For each DOJ intervention, declination, dismissal, or other extraordinary action taken in a matter involving Mr. Bondi since January 1, 2024, including the Amesty, Chakraverty, and Cruise Lines cases, provide the following information (in addition to what appears in any public filing):
  - a. The identity and role of all DOJ officials, including political or career, who participated in, reviewed, or approved the decision;

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<sup>10</sup> Trevor Milton (@nikolatrevor), X (Mar. 27, 2025, 8:13 PM), <https://x.com/nikolatrevor/status/1905412785661772107>.

<sup>11</sup> Kevin Liptak, *Trump explains pardon of Utah billionaire Trevor Milton who was convicted of fraud*, FOX13 NOW (Apr. 1, 2025), <https://www.fox13now.com/news/local-news/trump-explains-pardon-of-utah-billionaire-trevor-milton-who-was-convicted-of-fraud>.

<sup>12</sup> 5 C.F.R. § 2635.101(b)(8).

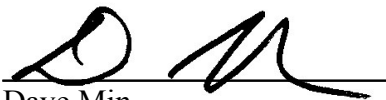
<sup>13</sup> 5 C.F.R. § 2635.502(a)(2).

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Dep’t of Just., *Justice Manual* §§ 1-4.010, 1-4.020, 1-4.200 (2023).

- b. The stated rationale for each action, and any internal rationale, analysis, or justification not reflected in public filings;
  - c. Whether political leadership, including AAG-level or higher, initiated, participated in, reviewed, or was briefed on these decisions;
  - d. Whether career prosecutors recommended for or against the action, and the basis of those recommendations;
  - e. Whether any written recommendations or dissenting views were submitted, either by political or career personnel.
4. Please provide all documents, communications, memoranda, and ethics evaluations produced or consulted by DOJ's Office of the Pardon Attorney regarding the pardon of Mr. Trevor Milton—granted despite his 2022 conviction on multiple federal securities-fraud and wire-fraud charges—including any materials indicating whether Attorney General Bondi or DOJ staff played any role, formal or informal, in this matter.
5. Has any DOJ employee filed a complaint, referral, or allegation involving Attorney General Bondi, Bradley Bondi, or potential conflicts of interest related to matters in which Mr. Bondi appeared? If so, provide:
  - a. The date of the complaint;
  - b. Whether it was filed with OPR, OIG, an ethics official, or a supervisor;
  - c. The status and resolution of each complaint;
  - d. Any associated documentation.

Thank you for your attention to this serious matter. The impartiality of our justice system to fairly uphold the law is paramount to our nation.

Sincerely,



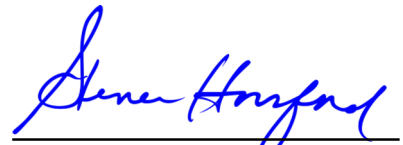
Dave Min  
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff  
United States Senator



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



Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



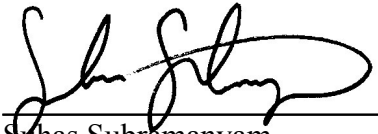
Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam  
Member of Congress

cc: Suzanne Drouet, Counsel, Department of Justice Office of Professional Responsibility  
Don R. Berthiaume, Acting Inspector General, Department of Justice