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July 22, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Mr. Scott Brecht
Chief of Police — U.S. Park Police
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Secretary Burgum and Chief of Police Brecht:

I write to express serious concern about U.S. Park Police's (USPP) new vehicle pursuit policy. Following the fatal accident of a Venezuelan delivery driver during a USPP police car chase in June 2026, I request that your Department provide full transparency and answers concerning the Department's revised pursuit policy, and the measures being implemented to reduce the risk of future accidents and fatalities.

USPP's vehicle pursuit policy has significantly changed since President Trump declared a crime emergency in the District of Columbia. Prior to that declaration, USPP operated under General Order 2205, which placed firm limits on when officers could initiate vehicular pursuits. Under the order, officers could initiate a vehicular pursuit only if the suspect was wanted for or suspected of committing a violent felony offense, or if they were known to be carrying a firearm and had explicit approval from a supervisor prior to initiating a pursuit.¹ On August 11, 2025, President Trump issued Executive Order 14333, "*Declaring a Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia*".² On August 14, 2025, citing that order, USPP formally issued an "emergency modification" to General Order 2205. Under the revised order, USPP officers may now initiate vehicular pursuits whenever a suspect is wanted for or suspected of committing a felony offense,

¹ U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Park Police, General Order 2205, Vehicular Pursuits (June 8, 2018), <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/foia/upload/G-O-2205-Vehicular-Pursuits-06-08-18.pdf>.

² Exec. Order No. 14333, Declaring a Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia, 90 Fed. Reg. 39301 (Aug. 11, 2025).

or when a threat to the public exists based on the suspect's actions. Additionally, officers must notify supervisors when engaging in vehicular pursuits, but supervisor approval is not required to initiate one.³

Weeks later, on August 25, 2025, President Trump issued a follow-on order, Executive Order, 14339, “*Additional Measures to Address the Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia*,” which directed the NPS to hire additional USPP officers and instructed NPS to “ensure enforcement of all applicable laws within their jurisdiction”.⁴ Since then, reports indicated an increase in USPP car chases ending in collisions and chases being initiated over nonviolent offenses, such as traffic violations or suspected stolen vehicles.⁵ Last month, Nolberto Armando Sanabria Meza, a 46-year-old food delivery driver, was tragically killed on the William Howard Taft Bridge in Northwest D.C. when a stolen vehicle being chased by USPP crossed into oncoming traffic and struck Mr. Meza’s moped.⁶ Mr. Meza was an innocent bystander who tragically lost his life.

Studies have found that vehicle pursuits are among the most lethal activities in policing, and a high percentage of pursuit-related deaths and injuries include individuals who were not involved in the underlying offense. Studies have consistently shown that vehicle pursuits do not protect or make communities safer and may, in fact, put officers, suspects, and bystanders at greater risk. Nearly a year after the change in USPP’s pursuit policy, there is little to no evidence that it has reduced crime or improved outcomes. The public deserves answers as to whether this policy change is working as intended.

In light of these concerns, I request comprehensive responses to the following questions by August 5, 2026:

1. What specific training have USPP officers received on the revised pursuit standards since it took effect in August 2025, and how does training differ from what officers received under the prior General Order?
2. What supervisory oversight or after-action review process is currently in place for USPP pursuits, given that supervisors are no longer required to provide approval to initiate vehicular pursuits?
3. What resources, including staffing and risk-assessment tools, have USPP provided officers to help evaluate whether a pursuit should be initiated or terminated in real time?
4. How many vehicle pursuits has USPP initiated since August 2025? Please provide the month and the underlying offense. In responding to this question, please indicate whether the underlying offense was a violent offense or a non-violent offense.

³ U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Park Police, General Order 2205, Vehicular Pursuits (June 8, 2018), <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/uspp/upload/G-O-2205-Vehicular-Pursuits-rev-2.pdf>.

⁴ Exec. Order No. 14339, *Additional Measures to Address the Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia*, 90 Fed. Reg. 42121 (Aug. 25, 2025).

⁵ Emma Uber, *Ten car chases. Six crashes. Park Police have new rules in Trump’s DC*, The Washington Post (Aug. 31, 2025), Available online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/08/31/park-police-car-chases/>

⁶ Liam Scott and Maia Nehme, *The Park Police allow chases. One just ended in a deliveryman’s death*. The Washington Post (June 27, 2026), Available online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2026/06/27/park-police-now-allow-chases-one-just-ended-death-deliveryman/>

5. How many USPP vehicle pursuits since August 2025 have resulted in crashes, injuries, or fatalities, and how many of the individuals harmed were bystanders with no connection to the pursuit?
6. Does USPP or the Department of the Interior intend to review, revise, or make permanent the current “emergency modification” to General Order 2205? If so, will the Department be allowing public input?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Energy and Natural
Resources