

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 24, 2026

Jeanine Ferris Pirro
United States Attorney for the District of Columbia
U.S. Department of Justice
601 D Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20579

Dear U.S. Attorney Pirro:

We write to request clarification on your recent announcement that your office has temporarily paused its criminal investigation into Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (Fed or Federal Reserve) Jerome Powell and your threat that you could restart the baseless investigation at any time.

In recent months, your office has been engaged in a pretextual investigation into Chair Powell.¹ Though nominally an examination of his congressional testimony about the Federal Reserve's renovation of two Washington, D.C. office buildings, the investigation was, in reality, driven by President Trump's displeasure that Chair Powell had not voted to lower interest rates at his request.² As recently as yesterday, when asked "what he hope[d] to learn" from your investigation into Chair Powell, President Trump said, "You have to find out what went wrong. ... On top of that, he's been terrible on interest rates, because he should have lowered interest rates."³ Republicans and Democrats criticized your farcical investigation, which threatens the confirmation prospects of Kevin Warsh, President Trump's nominee to serve as the next Chair of the Federal Reserve.⁴

Earlier today, you promised a temporary pause to the investigation. Specifically, you announced, "This morning the Inspector General for the Federal Reserve has been asked to scrutinize the [Fed's] building costs overruns ... I expect a comprehensive report in short order ... Accordingly, I have directed my office to close our investigation as the IG undertakes this inquiry."⁵ Your announcement also contained a stark warning that you were prepared to reopen the criminal probe at any moment: "Note well, however, that I will not hesitate to restart a criminal investigation should the facts warrant doing so."⁶

¹ New York Times, "Federal Prosecutors Open Investigation Into Fed Chair Powell," Glenn Thrush and Colby Smith, January 11, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/11/us/politics/jerome-powell-fed-inquiry-trump.html>.

² *Id.*; Politico, "Court blocks probe of Fed Chair Jerome Powell, DOJ to appeal," Sam Sutton, Josh Gerstein, and Jasper Goodman, March 13, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/13/court-blocks-doj-probe-of-fed-chair-jerome-powell-00828448>.

³ Post on X by Eleanor Mueller, April 23, 2026, https://x.com/eleanor_mueller/status/2047417167453237756.

⁴ Politico, "Tillis says DOJ probe of Powell 'reaching the point of the absurd,'" Victoria Guida, March 11, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/live-updates/2026/03/11/congress/tillis-doj-probe-powell-fed-chair-confirmation-00823332>; ; Letter from U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren and Richard J. Durbin to Attorney General Pamela Bondi, January 20, 2026, https://www.banking.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/letter_to_doj_ag_bondi1.pdf.

⁵ Post on X by U.S. Attorney Pirro, April 24, 2026, <https://x.com/usattypirro/status/2047679907312939264>.

⁶ *Id.*

As we have stated repeatedly, the Administration’s politically motivated criminal investigations of Powell and Fed Governor Lisa Cook⁷ have been a flagrant abuse of power that should never have been started in the first place. These probes should be closed – and should stay closed, with a clear statement that there is no basis for reopening them. Instead, your announcement leaves the door wide open for you to relaunch the criminal probe against Chair Powell – or future baseless investigations into Powell or other Fed Governors and a future Fed Chair – should it once again become politically expedient for you to do so. Your assertion that the “facts” will guide your future decision-making is also cold comfort, as it appears that the President’s whims—not reality—have guided the DOJ’s investigation to date.

To help us better understand DOJ’s intentions, we request answers to the following questions no later than April 27, 2026:

1. Did you tell President Trump in advance of your April 24, 2026, announcement that you planned to, at least temporarily, close your investigation into Chair Powell? If so, what did he say?
2. Have you, or any employee of the Department of Justice, had any conversations with President Trump, or any employee of the White House or the Treasury Department, regarding plans to reopen an investigation into Jerome Powell? If so:
 - a. Provide summaries of all verbal communications.
 - b. Provide copies of all emails, documents, meeting notes, and other written correspondence.
 - c. When do you plan to reopen the investigation?
3. Your announcement states, “This morning the Inspector General for the Federal Reserve has been asked to scrutinize the building costs overruns.”⁸
 - a. Who, specifically, asked the Inspector General to do so this morning? Provide copies of all relevant emails, documents, meeting notes, and other written correspondence, as well as summaries of all verbal communications.
 - b. In July 2025, Chair Powell asked the Inspector General of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to review the Fed’s renovation project.⁹ That work is ongoing.¹⁰
 - i. How does the review requested this morning differ, if at all, from the Inspector General’s existing review of the renovation projects?

⁷ The New York Times, “Justice Dept. Opens Criminal Inquiry Into Lisa Cook, Elevating Trump’s Claims,” Glenn Thrush, Devlin Barrett and Tony Romm, September 4, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/04/us/politics/lisa-cook-trump-fed-governor-justice-dept.html>.

⁸ Post on X by U.S. Attorney Pirro, April 24, 2026, <https://x.com/usattypirro/status/2047679907312939264>.

⁹ Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “FAQs,” last updated March 27, 2026, <https://www.federalreserve.gov/faqs/building-project-faqs.htm>; NBC News, “Powell asks inspector general to review \$2.5 billion renovation after Trump blasts Fed project,” Jeff Cox, July 14, 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/business-news/powell-asks-inspector-general-review-25-billion-renovation-trump-blast-rcna218714>.

¹⁰ Office of Inspector General, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, “Ongoing Work,” <https://oig.federalreserve.gov/reports/ongoing-work.htm#q2082>.

- ii. If there is no difference, why was the Inspector General asked to complete duplicative work—a potential waste of taxpayer dollars?
 - iii. If there is no difference, what changed between your launching of a criminal probe into Chair Powell and today to render the Inspector General’s existing work sufficient to justify closing the criminal probe?
4. From your perspective, what are the types of “facts” that would warrant reopening the investigation?
- a. If you identified a fact pattern that, in your mind, warranted re-opening the investigation, but you received that information while Kevin Warsh’s nomination was still pending in the U.S. Senate, would you wait to re-open the investigation, or would you act immediately? Why?
5. Has the DOJ dropped its reported criminal investigation of Fed Governor Lisa Cook? If not, when does it plan to drop it?



Elizabeth Warren
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Senate
Committee on the Judiciary

Sincerely,

CC: Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche