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July 8, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

RE: End Political Retribution Against Assistant U.S. Attorney to Ensure Prosecution of Florida Fraudster and Justice for Victims

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

I urge you to reconsider the recent dismissal of Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Gordon from the Department of Justice. His removal—documented in your June 27 memo—comes at a pivotal moment in the federal prosecution of St. Petersburg fraudster Leo Govoni, who stands accused of orchestrating one of the largest fraud schemes in Florida’s recent history. The timing and circumstances of Mr. Gordon’s termination raise serious concerns about political retribution and threaten to derail justice for victims who have already suffered for far too long.

Mr. Govoni is charged with embezzling over **\$100 million** from medical trust funds intended to safeguard the long-term care of vulnerable individuals, including individuals with disabilities, injured workers, and retirees across Florida. These funds—managed by nonprofits Govoni helped found—were systematically siphoned into shell companies and fraudulent investment vehicles, allegedly to support his lavish personal lifestyle. Victims were blindsided when their accounts were drained, leaving them without the resources they relied on for housing, therapy, medication, and basic dignity.

The harm inflicted is especially profound in the Tampa Bay area:

- In **St. Petersburg**, *Rebekah Bowman* trusted Govoni with \$800,000 from a settlement meant to care for her disabled son, *Kienan Freeman*, who requires lifelong support due to a severe seizure disorder. Govoni personally assured her the funds would be protected and grown. Instead, federal investigators found the account partially emptied, and the nonprofit declared bankruptcy. Rebekah shared: “He promised that he would take care of the money and help it grow... and then I shouldn’t have to worry about the money.” After watching Govoni remain free while her son’s care became uncertain, she said: “He gets to walk free and the rest of us still have to struggle.”
- In **Tampa**, *Melissa Beck* witnessed her father, *Thomas Hancock*, denied chemotherapy despite having over \$347,000 in a Medicare Set-Aside account Govoni’s nonprofit claimed to manage. Hancock, permanently disabled after a fall in 2007, died on May 16, 2025, from complications

of cancer and COPD. Melissa discovered the alleged theft only after his death and now seeks justice. She said: “My feeling is this man killed my father... My father could’ve gotten treatment. Maybe he could have survived?” And added: “There’s no amount of money that is going to bring my dad back... but my dad deserves justice, and I will fight until my last breath to get it.”

The victims of Govoni’s alleged fraud number in the thousands—each with painful and personal stories. Mr. Gordon’s removal places this case, and their hope for accountability, in jeopardy.

Equally alarming is the dismissal of a highly regarded Department of Justice prosecutor for purely politically vindictive reasons. Mr. Gordon previously served as senior trial counsel for the Capitol Siege Section of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia. His team prosecuted individuals involved in the **January 6 violent insurrection**, during which nearly **140 police officers were injured**, suffering broken bones, burns, and blunt trauma. Officer Brian Sicknick died from strokes after being assaulted; four others died by suicide in the aftermath. Rioters committed serious crimes including:

- Assaulting law enforcement officers with flagpoles, bear spray, and blunt weapons
- Seditious conspiracy, as in the case of Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio
- Obstruction of congressional proceedings
- Destruction and theft of government property
- Unlawful entry into restricted federal buildings, often while armed

As of January 20, 2025, 1,575 individuals were charged in connection with the attack. Yet on his first day back in office, in what is a deep stain of callous disregard for the U.S. Constitution and rule of law, President Trump pardoned over 1,500 convicted rioters, including violent offenders. He has since fired prosecutors and FBI agents who worked on these cases. Your dismissal of Mr. Gordon—alongside two other career prosecutors—marks the first time that non-probationary federal attorneys were removed for their role in these prosecutions. These actions appear petty and vindictive, aimed at punishing those who upheld the rule of law.

I respectfully request that you stand up for the victims of the Govoni crimes, reinstate Mr. Gordon immediately and allow the prosecution of Leo Govoni to proceed unimpeded. The victims deserve closure, and the public deserves a justice system free from intimidation and partisan retribution.

Sincerely,



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

CC: Gregory W. Kehoe, United States Attorney, Middle District of Florida