

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 4, 2024

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigations
953 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Attorney General Garland and Director Wray,


I write to urge the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Justice (DOJ) to fully investigate the recent racist, threatening mass text messages targeting Black, Hispanic, and LGBTQ Georgians.

According to media reports, anonymous senders have targeted Black Georgians with hateful text messages intended to intimidate and harass. Among other disturbing messages, texts threaten that recipients must report to “pick cotton at the nearest plantation” so they are not “whipped.”¹ According to the FBI, Latino and LGBTQ individuals subsequently received similar threats, suggesting they “were selected for deportation or to report to a reeducation camp”² Both adults and children have received such messages, causing severe emotional distress to recipients and their family members alike.³ Recipients report that these messages cause them to fear for their safety.

These mass communications are an attack on the safety and dignity of Georgians and they may violate federal and state laws. It is imperative that the Department of Justice fully investigate these hateful threats and harassment, including of children.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Senator Jon Ossoff

¹ Joyce Lupiani et al., *Georgia residents reporting disturbing racist messages before, after election*, Fox 5 Atl. (Nov. 7, 2024), <https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/georgia-residents-reporting-disturbing-racist-messages-before-after-election>.

² Kim Bellware, et al., *FBI investigating post-election text threats sent to Latino, LGBTQ people*, Wash. Post (Nov. 18, 2024), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2024/11/18/election-texts-fbi-investigation/>.

³ Nicole Acevedo et al., *Texts threatening deportation and 're-education' for gays stoke both fear and defiance*, NBC News (Nov. 18, 2024), <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/lgbtq-latino-communities-targeted-deportation-reeducation-texts-fbi-rcna180624>.