



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense
United States Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hegseth,

I write regarding your June 7, 2025, social media post stating that “active duty *[sic]* Marines at Camp Pendleton will... be mobilized” for the purpose of law enforcement in Los Angeles.¹ This threat is a significant escalation of rhetoric and action that has the potential to further destabilize the situation in Los Angeles.

The United States Armed Forces have a long history of remaining apolitical. In fact, this is one of the fundamental principles that makes our country great. Our men and women in uniform are trained to be the most lethal fighting force in the world. We deploy them in defense of our homeland and in support of our national interest; we do not put warfighters on the ground in American cities to repress civilians.

As the representative of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in the United States Congress, I consider it my duty to fight for the readiness, preparation, and well-being of the Marines and Sailors who serve in my district. I also want to make sure each one of them has a job, a home, and the best possible health care once they separate from the service.

With this in mind, I found your threat to deploy Marines to Los Angeles for the purpose of law enforcement to be extremely disturbing. Our Marines are trained to be lethal; they are not trained for law enforcement. Your decision to mobilize them in an act of political theater runs counter to their training. Doing so would also undermine the apolitical nature of our Armed Forces, dealing a serious blow to the very fabric of our great nation.

I ask that you respond to the following questions:

1. Under what authority are you planning to mobilize Marines?
2. How many Marines are being mobilized?

¹ X, <https://x.com/PeteHegseth/status/1931533276985823392>

3. What specific duties are Marines expected to carry out?
4. What training do Marines have to carry out these specific duties?
5. Was the order coordinated with the leadership of the United States Marine Corps?
6. Will Marines be authorized to use lethal force?
7. Will troops be informed of their rights to disobey orders they believe are unlawful?

Please reply by June 11, 2025. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Levin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

MIKE LEVIN
Member of Congress