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OGC 2021-114

Senator Ron Johnson
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Johnson,

Thank you for your letter dated April 22, 2021 regarding the District of Columbia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's (DCOCME) conclusion on the cause and manner of death for Officer Brian Sicknick. Chief Pittman has asked me to respond on behalf of the Department. As you know, this matter is under criminal investigation by the District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police Department and the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. In addition, there are currently pending criminal charges against two defendants for assaulting Officer Sicknick. Therefore, we are limited in what our Department can provide to you in terms of information.

We can assure you, however, that when we released our press statement on January 7th, we believed that Officer Sicknick had died from injuries sustained while on-duty after physically engaging with protestors. It took the DCOCME several months of extensive forensic testing and investigation to reach its medical conclusion, supported by an autopsy report, while our press release was issued in the immediate aftermath of the January 6th assault on the U.S. Capitol by violent insurrectionists. Indeed, the DCOCME conclusion does not mean that Officer Sicknick was not assaulted nor that the events at the Capitol did not contribute to his death. Moreover, the Department never put out a press release nor made a statement that Officer Sicknick had been assaulted by a fire extinguisher. Finally, I am not aware of any contact between the House impeachment managers and the Department on the issue of Officer Sicknick's death.

In closing, I too share your dismay that our officer's death may be used for political purposes.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. (Tad) DiBiase
General Counsel