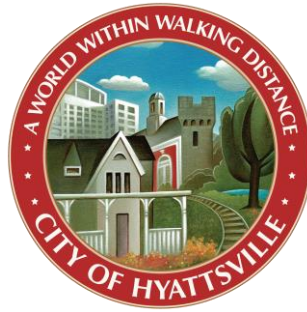


Kevin Ward  
Interim Mayor



Tracey E. Douglas  
City Administrator

William C. Ferguson IV, President, Maryland Senate  
11 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker, Maryland House of Delegates  
State House, H-101, State Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401

Brian E. Frosh, Maryland Attorney General  
200 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: Maryland response to the January 6, 2021 events at the United States Capitol

Dear Senator Ferguson, Speaker Jones, and Attorney General Frosh:

The January 6, 2021 attack on the United States Capitol was an egregious offense against our democracy and amounted to nothing short of domestic terrorism. It is the opinion of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Hyattsville that the events at the United States Capitol should serve as a lesson from which the State and its municipalities can learn.

Most can agree that individuals who participated in the attack in any manner should be prosecuted to the fullest extent permitted by law. The Mayor and City Council of the City of Hyattsville requests that the General Assembly take steps during the current legislative session which would prioritize and better enable the prosecution of such individuals under Maryland State law, where appropriate, and to further protect Maryland residents from similar acts of insurrection which may occur in the future.

Although there are State laws under which individuals who commit similar offenses toward the Maryland General Assembly may be prosecuted, see e.g., § 2-1702 of the State Government Article, Md. Code Ann. (prohibiting an individual from disrupting or interfering with a session, meeting, or proceeding of the General Assembly; prohibiting an individual from willfully bringing an assault weapon, firearm, or destructive device into a chamber or office of the General Assembly; providing criminal penalties for the same); §§ 6-409 (criminalizing the refusal or failure to leave a public building or grounds), 10-201 (criminalizing a disturbance of the public peace and disorderly conduct in public places), 4-208 (prohibiting a person from possessing a firearm at a demonstration in a public place) of the Criminal Law Article, Md. Code Ann., the General Assembly should enact legislation which criminalizes additional acts of domestic terrorism. Criminal acts which are predicated upon an intent to terrorize or to disrupt the orderly conduct of government should also carry enhanced sentences. Such legislation should also permit the local prosecution of those who participate in acts of insurrection on federal property but utilize State resources in the process, such as driving on State roads or staying at hotels within the State. The State should have mechanisms by which it can

apprehend and charge such individuals. Any such legislation should be drafted so as to foster trust within African American, Latino, Indigenous, and LGBTQ populations, rather than increasing surveillance and over policing of said populations.

The events of January 6, 2021 also resulted in the over taxing of police departments, especially those in Prince George's County, whereby local departments had to rapidly develop plans to protect their jurisdictions from any potential spill over from the events which took place in Washington, D.C. The Mayor and City Council of the City of Hyattsville believe that coordinated plans, akin to those which are implemented under states of emergency, need to be created to allow the sharing of resources and information between State and municipal agencies. As such, it is requested that some sort of task force be commissioned to develop coordination plans between State and local agencies in responding to the threat of domestic terror within the State.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Hyattsville are also concerned about reports from across the country which indicate that members of local police departments, who hold radical and racially prejudicial beliefs, participated in the assault on the Capitol. As such, the City requests that the General Assembly consider creating a committee for the purpose of studying whether systemic political and racial bias exist within police departments in the State. Any such committee would then present findings and make recommendations to the General Assembly about how best to proceed, should there be a need.

Furthermore, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Hyattsville ask that the General Assembly and the Office of the Attorney General develop a program by which agencies and stakeholders share any data and information learned about threats of domestic terrorism that may arise within the State. A knowledge-sharing program such as this would uniformly increase preparedness and responses. The City also asks that the public be made aware of any domestic terror activity, so that residents know the types of behavior to report to law enforcement agencies as domestic terror activity.

What occurred at the United States Capitol was an assault on the very foundation of our democracy. The Mayor and City Council of the City of Hyattsville requests that the General Assembly and Office of the Attorney General take action in line with the above-outlined steps which aim to not only prevent acts of domestic terrorism but will also best enable the State and local municipalities to respond in the event that they do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KW', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Ward  
Interim Mayor  
City of Hyattsville

cc: Hyattsville City Council