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**DOJ OIG Releases Report on the FBI's Handling of Its Confidential Human Sources and Intelligence Collection Efforts in the Lead Up to the January 6, 2021 Electoral Certification**

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a [review](#) examining the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) handling of its confidential human sources (CHS) and intelligence collection efforts in the lead up to the events at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Consistent with OIG practice, in spring 2022 the OIG paused aspects of our review to ensure that the OIG's investigative work did not conflict with or compromise any ongoing DOJ criminal investigations or prosecutions. Having been informed by federal prosecutors last year that our review would no longer potentially interfere with pending criminal prosecutions, we resumed our work on this matter. In doing so, we were cognizant of the amount of time that had passed, as well as the number of non-DOJ OIG oversight reports that had been publicly released regarding the events of January 6. We determined that an area that had not yet been thoroughly reviewed by other entities was the FBI's direction and handling of its CHSs in the lead-up to and on January 6, and whether the FBI exploited its CHSs and other available information to determine the nature of threats in advance of the electoral vote certification on January 6. Accordingly, we focused our review on that topic.

The findings in today's report include:

- **The FBI Took Significant and Appropriate Steps in Advance of January 6 to Prepare for its Supporting Role.** Despite playing only a supporting role in preparing for and responding to the events of January 6, the FBI recognized the potential for violence and took significant and appropriate steps to prepare for this supporting role.
- **The FBI Did Not Canvass Field Offices for Intelligence from CHSs Prior to January 6, which Could Have Helped the FBI and Law Enforcement with Their January 6 Preparations.** The FBI could have taken an additional step to canvass its field offices in advance of January 6 to identify any intelligence, including CHS reporting, that might have assisted with the FBI and law enforcement partners' preparations for January 6. FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate described the lack of a canvass prior to January 6 as a "basic step that was missed," and told the OIG that he would have expected a formal canvassing of sources to have occurred.
- **Confusion and Lack of Coordination Contributed to the FBI's Inaccurate Report to Congress that It Had Canvassed Field Offices.** After January 6, the FBI reported to Congress that it had directed its field offices prior to January 6 to canvass their CHSs for information concerning threats in connection with the January 6 Electoral Certification. However, as noted, we found that no canvassing of field offices for source information had occurred. We found that the FBI's statements

to Congress were not intentionally inaccurate, and that confusion and lack of coordinated communications contributed to the inaccurate reporting.

- **No Undercover FBI Employees at Protests or at the Capitol on January 6.** We found no evidence in the materials we reviewed or the testimony we received showing or suggesting that the FBI had undercover employees in the various protest crowds, or at the Capitol, on January 6.

Today's report also details our findings regarding FBI CHSs who were in Washington, D.C., on January 6. Our review determined that none of these FBI CHSs was authorized by the FBI to enter the Capitol or a restricted area or to otherwise break the law on January 6, nor was any CHS directed by the FBI to encourage others to commit illegal acts on January 6. Our findings also include:

- Twenty-six FBI CHSs were in Washington, D.C. on January 6 in connection with the events of January 6.
  - The OIG determined that three of those CHSs had been tasked by FBI field offices to report on specific domestic terrorism case subjects who were possibly attending the events of January 6. One of these three CHSs entered the Capitol during the riot. The other two entered the restricted area around the Capitol.
  - Twenty-three additional FBI CHSs were in Washington, D.C., and attended January 6 events, but we determined that these CHSs did so on their own initiative and were not tasked by FBI field offices to attend the events. Of these 23 CHSs, three CHSs entered the Capitol during the riot and an additional 11 entered the restricted area around the Capitol.
  - The remaining nine CHSs who attended the events of January 6 did not enter the Capitol or the restricted area or otherwise engage in illegal activity.
- Although many of the 26 CHSs who attended January 6 events had provided information relevant to the January 6 Electoral Certification before that day, the sources' information was no more specific than, and was consistent with, other sources of information that the FBI and its WFO had received about the potential for violence on January 6, including from other sources, tips the FBI received, and from social media. A few of the 26 CHSs also provided information about the riot as it occurred.
- Our review did not identify any potentially critical intelligence in the FBI's possession as of January 6 that had not been provided to, or was not otherwise known to law enforcement stakeholders prior to January 6.

The DOJ OIG made one recommendation to the FBI to assess the policies and procedures it uses to prepare for events that it determines present potential domestic security issues. The FBI agreed with this recommendation.

**Report:** Today's report is available on our [website](#).

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