

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 4, 2026

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable Michael Brown
Acting Director
Bureau of Engraving and Printing
14th and C Streets, SW
Washington, DC 20228

Secretary Bessent and Acting Director Brown,

We write out of concern regarding a deeply disturbing incident in which a noose was found hung at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP)¹ shortly before the Juneteenth holiday.² Every employee deserves a workplace free from threats of harm and discrimination. A hanging noose is a stark reminder of this country's history of racial violence and lynching of African Americans. It serves as a potent symbol of hate used to send a clear message to Black employees at BEP that this is not a safe environment for you to serve the American people. BEP has indicated that there is an investigation into the incident and has reportedly placed the employee accused of hanging the noose on administrative leave, and it is our understanding that the Treasury Department Office of Inspector General may be conducting a review.³ We urge you to ensure a robust, timely investigation, and we request a briefing from the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) and BEP on the incident and the Administration's response.

It is important that all of our federal agencies comply with anti-discrimination laws and ensure safety and security in the workplace, especially in the midst of an intentional effort from this Administration to dismantle diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace practices and policies. The Treasury Department and its Bureaus are subject to multiple statutory requirements designed to ensure that its workforce is safe from discrimination and harassment. The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act requires the Department to establish an Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI), which is charged with promoting diversity and inclusion within the agency and its regulated entities. This is a legal obligation that cannot be negated by executive decree. In addition to promoting diversity and inclusion, Treasury must also uphold its statutory obligations under the Dodd-Frank Act and federal anti-discrimination laws, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, and other laws that form the foundation of workplace protections. When agency leadership is not intentional about ensuring that every employee is able to effectively perform a job free of racism and discrimination, bad actors can feel emboldened to unleash deep-seated hatred.

This reported incident—the hanging of a noose at a BEP facility—is unacceptable. Unfortunately, it follows other troubling, race-related incidents and cultural problems at Treasury and its Bureaus. In June 2020, a group of Black employees at the Mint wrote a letter to then Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to intervene and address what they called “rampant racism” at the Mint.⁴ The employees highlighted several race-related incidents, such as a noose discovered at a Philadelphia facility in 2017. In addition, the New York Times

¹ [Noose Federal Facility Prompts Request Congressional Oversight](#), Washington Post, (July 2026).

² Juneteenth is a Federal Holiday that marks the official ending of Chattel Slavery in the United States.

³ [Noose Federal Facility Prompts Request Congressional Oversight](#), Washington Post, (July 2026).

⁴ [Treasury Probes Claims of Racial Discrimination at U.S. Mint](#), Wall Street Journal, (Sep. 18, 2020).

reported that when the U.S. Mint commissioned a cultural assessment survey by an external vendor, the internal report revealed that Black employees felt marginalized, threatened and professionally disadvantaged.⁵

The hanging of a noose at a BEP facility requires an immediate, robust investigation and response. We urge Treasury and BEP leadership to fully cooperate with the Office of Inspector General's investigation into these incidents. Additionally, we request an immediate briefing regarding the actions taken by BEP and Treasury leadership immediately following the incident. This briefing should also include channels available to employees to report instances of discrimination within the Bureau, without fear of retaliation. This incident requires immediate action in addition to systemic changes that ensure a safer, more inclusive environment for all employees.

Sincerely,



Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services



Elizabeth Warren
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking, Housing,
and Urban Affairs

⁵ [*Racial Turmoil Mars Signs of Progress at the U.S. Mint*](#), New York Times, (Jan. 21, 2022).