



# Democrats request briefing on police actions towards protest White House

BY RACHEL FRAZIN - 06/02/20 08:19 PM EDT

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Democrats on the House Natural Resources Committee are requesting a briefing from the U.S. Park Police (USPP) after they and other law enforcement officers dispersed crowds protesting against police brutality outside the White House.

Natural Resources Committee Chairman Raúl Grijalva (Ariz.) and Rep. [Deb Haaland](#) (D-N.M.), who leads the panel's Natural Parks subcommittee, [asked](#) that USPP staff contact the panel "to arrange a briefing, to be conducted remotely, for members of the committee to examine the role of the U.S. Park Police during the June 1 incident."

"We require further information about alarming reports indicating that U.S. Park Police were among the law enforcement officers who launched a violent attack on peaceful protesters in Lafayette Park to clear the way for [President Trump's](#) photo opportunity at St. John's Episcopal Church," the lawmakers wrote in their letter to the head of the USPP. "Officers are credibly accused of launching flash bangs, tear gas, and shooting rubber pellets at unarmed, nonviolent protesters."

"This grossly irresponsible action put bystanders, unarmed protesters, clergy, and other law enforcement agents in danger," they continued, adding that Park Police "must not be used as a tool to perpetuate institutional racism or commit violence against the American people."

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[Multiple news outlets reported](#) Monday that tear gas was used against protesters, though acting USPP Chief Gregory Monahan [insisted on Tuesday](#) that tear gas was not deployed, saying it was "smoke canisters and pepper balls."

"As many of the protestors became more combative, continued to throw projectiles, and attempted to grab officers' weapons, officers then employed the use of smoke canisters and pepper balls," Monahan said.

"No tear gas was used by USPP officers or other assisting law enforcement partners to close the area at Lafayette Park," he added.

The acting chief also stated that protesters threw bricks, frozen water bottles and "caustic" liquids at officers.

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USPP did not immediately respond to The Hill's request for comment on the briefing.

A series of protests have broken out across the country in recent days following the death of George Floyd, an unarmed black man who died after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee on his neck for an extended period despite Floyd's plea for air.

President Trump on Monday said that he was "an ally of all peaceful protesters" but also said he would deploy the U.S. military to try to quell the situation.

**TAGS** DONALD TRUMP DEB HAALAND



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