



[Attorney General Barr Testifies Before the House Judiciary Committee](#)

Attorney General William Barr testified before the House Judiciary Committee earlier this week on Tuesday. A range of topics were covered during the oftentimes contentious hearing including the deployment of federal law enforcement officers to cities like Portland, the nationwide protests against police brutality and systemic racism, the probe regarding Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election, and the criminal case against President Trump's longtime adviser Roger Stone. Barr also addressed mail-in voting concerns, something the president has repeatedly claimed would lead to fraudulent election results, despite Trump himself voting by mail on multiple occasions. Overall, the hearing marked Barr's first-ever appearance in front of the House panel during his tenure in the Trump administration and his first session before Congress in over a year.

Tuesday's hearing on Capitol Hill was originally scheduled for 10am ET, but was delayed by about an hour until 11am ET due to a minor car accident involving House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) on his drive from New York down to Washington. Previously, Nadler had threatened to subpoena Barr over a month ago to testify before his committee after the firing of Geoffrey Berman as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York. There were suspicious circumstances surrounding Berman's dismissal since his office was engaged in an investigation into Trump ally Rudy Giuliani. Berman initially refused to step down, stating that he would only do so when his replacement was confirmed by the Senate, however, Barr informed him in a letter that President Trump had already decided to fire him.

House Judiciary Committee members berated Barr for what they charged was a breakdown in the independence of the justice system, accusing the attorney general of corrupting it to benefit President Trump and his allies. They criticized him for a variety of actions such as the decision to drop the case against former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn and for the deployment of federal security forces against protesters in cities like Washington D.C. and Portland. Additionally, the committee members also accused Barr of spreading misinformation about the risk of mail-in voting, particularly since there is no viable evidence that this commonly-used method of casting ballots leads to election fraud. Barr retaliated to the bevy of critiques by accusing Democrats of ignoring the violent elements of the widespread protests against police brutality, which have sprung up all across the country in the wake of George Floyd's murder back in late May.

The importance of the hearing was magnified in large part because it has taken more than a year to arrange Barr's appearance. Congressional Democrats first sought his testimony back in May of 2019, shortly following the release of the Mueller Report regarding perceived Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. However, Barr called off the hearing after Nadler unveiled plans to allow staff counsel to question him. Later, another attempt for Barr's testimony back in March of this year fell through due to the coronavirus pandemic. Finally, after Nadler's threat to subpoena Barr over the Berman incident, the two sides ultimately agreed to the hearing which took place this week.