



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on June 12, 2024

AG Garland Responds to House Contempt Vote

Today House Republicans passed H. Res. 1292 — “Recommending that the House of Representatives find United States Attorney General Merrick B. Garland in Contempt of Congress for Refusal to Comply with a Subpoena Duly Issued by the Committee on the Judiciary” — by a [vote of 216 to 207](#) at 4:43 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, just before the House adjourned.

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued Attorney General Merrick Garland’s response, [stating in a press release](#):



AP Images
Merrick Garland

It is deeply disappointing that this House of Representatives has turned a serious congressional authority into a partisan weapon. Today’s vote disregards the constitutional separation of powers, the Justice Department’s need to protect its investigations, and the substantial amount of information we have provided to the Committees. I will always stand up for this Department, its employees, and its vital mission to defend our democracy.

Representative Anna Paulina Luna (R-Fla.) responded to Garland’s statement by alleging he defied two subpoenas and saying he was not above the law. She said Garland will be held accountable if he fails to release the audio recordings of special counsel Robert Hur’s interview with President Joe Biden, [stating on X](#):

Garland, you have defied two subpoenas. You are not above the law. Turn over the recording. Congress and the American people have a right to this information. You WILL be held accountable if you do not turn over the evidence.

[She also stated](#) that if Garland refuses to release the recordings, he will be held by the House Sergeant at Arms:

The House just voted to hold Garland in Contempt for refusing to comply with subpoenas. If the DOJ has not indicted him by June 25, I will call a vote to hold him in inherent contempt of Congress, and he will be forced to produce the recordings or be held by the Sergeant at



Arms.

[And in a press release](#), Representative Harriet Hageman (R-Wyo.) said Garland had no grounds for withholding the recordings, stating in a press release:

There are no grounds for withholding audio or video recordings from President Biden's interview with Special Council [sic] Hur considering that the Department of Justice provided the transcript months ago. The moment that the transcript was released, the right to exert Executive Privilege was waived. The tapes are important for several reasons. First, transcripts have been altered by this White House for previous speeches and events, so having the transcript verified as accurate by the recordings would be useful. Second, while transcripts can show us what was said, they do not reveal *how* something was said. The Department of Justice has already acknowledged that the transcript and the recordings are not identical — we must be allowed to know to what extent they are different. Attorney General Garland must comply with the Congressionally issued subpoena or face the consequences for not doing so.



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