



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 29, 2020

Trump's Letter to Pritzker, Lightfoot About Violence in Chicago Laughed Off as Political Stunt

Following another weekend of extraordinary violence in Chicago, President Trump [sent a letter on Friday](#) accusing both Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Illinois Governor JB Pritzker of "lack of leadership."

Referring to the record-breaking "18 murders in 24 hours" on May 31, the president was "horrified," adding, "Your lack of leadership on this important issue continues to fail the people you have sworn to protect."



He added:

I am concerned it is another example of your lack of commitment to the vulnerable citizens who are victims of this violence, and a lack of respect for the men and women in law enforcement....

More Americans have been killed in Chicago than in combat zones of Afghanistan and Iraq combined since September 11, 2001, a deadly trend that has continued under your tenure.

While millions of federal tax dollars have been poured into the state under various programs designed to stem the violence, wrote the President, "in the absence of any modicum of leadership ... these substantial sums of taxpayer money are not being turned into results, and the safety of your most vulnerable communities continues to deteriorate."

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He made a peace offering: "If you are willing to put partisanship aside, we can revitalize distressed neighborhoods in Chicago together. But to succeed, you must establish law and order.... If you are interested, I am willing to ask members of my Cabinet to meet with you and help devise a plan to make Chicago safe, since a successful formula has escaped both you and your predecessors."

Perhaps predicting what the response he would likely get from his peace offering, he ended the letter: "Unfortunately, you continue to put your own political interests ahead of the lives, safety and fortunes of your own citizens. The people of Chicago deserve better."

A spokesman for the governor called the president a failure and his letter a political "stunt":

President Trump is a failure who has once again resorted to a press stunt in order to detract from his long list of failures, especially his response to the deadly coronavirus and nationwide calls for racial justice.

The people of this state and this nation have unfortunately come to expect his unhinged attempts to politicize tragedy with his predictable and worn-out strategy to distract, distract, distract. The Governor stands with the Mayor in working to accomplish meaningful change.

Chicago Mayor Lightfoot, piqued at the president's criticism, also pushed back: "I don't need leadership lessons from Donald Trump", adding:



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As our police officers, street outreach workers and residents continue to work tirelessly to keep our communities safe, [the President] is using the victims of gun violence in our city to score cheap political points, spew racist rhetoric, and ignore the impacts of COVID across the country.

It is despicable, disgusting and all too typical. Same old tired playbook.

How about some leadership not steeped in the divide and conquer tactics?

I stand with the Governor in providing for the safety and well-being of our residents.

In the meantime, the violence continues to escalate. From midafternoon Friday, June 19, through early Monday morning, June 22, at least 106 people were shot in Chicago, 14 of them fatally. It not only was one of the most violent weekends in the city's history, it brought to 295 the number of homicides already recorded so far this year, 60 more than last year at this same time.

Image: marchello74/iStock/Getty Images Plus

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