

## United States Senate

November 13, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
2201 C Street Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Kevin McAleenan  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
245 Murray Lane, SW  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Pompeo and Acting Secretary McAleenan,

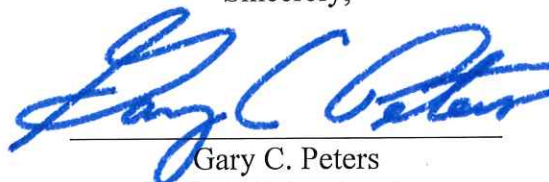
I am writing to express my concerns about President Erdogan's visit to Washington, D.C today. When President Erdogan came to Washington in 2017, his security detail assaulted U.S. security officials and attacked civilians during a brutal and unnecessary confrontation outside of the Turkish Ambassador's residence. This followed his 2016 visit to Washington, when his bodyguards tried to physically drag journalists away from the Brookings Institution. Given this pattern of aggressive behavior and disregard for our right to free speech and assembly, I have serious concerns about costs to the American taxpayer and public safety hazards associated with President Erdogan's return.

There will likely be heightened media and protest activity surrounding President Erdogan due to Turkey's destabilizing military operations in Syria. Turkey's incursion against our Kurdish allies is completely unacceptable. That is why President Erdogan has drawn global condemnation. I am appalled that Turkish-backed militants were recently recorded by U.S. surveillance targeting innocent civilians in northeastern Syria, according to a new report from Wall Street Journal. Although we should not host President Erdogan at all due to these ongoing events, at a minimum we must ensure we are prepared for the risks involved.

We must take every precaution possible to protect peaceful protesters, journalists, and security officials. I urge you to take appropriate measures to prevent another confrontation, including by deploying additional security personnel and minimizing the chances of President Erdogan's security detail coming in close contact with demonstrators. I am also concerned about the financial burden associated with hosting President Erdogan due to his violent security detail. I ask that you provide me with an accounting of the total cost, including the cost of deploying additional security personnel. Turkey should also be held responsible for the cost of any damages to U.S. property or personnel should an episode of violence occur. U.S. taxpayers should not be forced to pay when Turkish officials come here and break the law.

I look forward to your response to this letter with the information requested within 30 days.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator