

**Sent via overnight UPS and email on July 9, 2025.**

July 9, 2025

The Honorable Daniel P. Driscoll  
Secretary of the Army  
101 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Dear Secretary Driscoll,

We are a group of family members who lost loved ones when an Army Black Hawk helicopter collided with American Eagle Flight 5342 near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport on January 29, 2025.

As you can imagine, losing people we love dearly in such a sudden and traumatic manner has been incredibly difficult. Our lives—and the lives of so many others who were touched by our family members—will never be the same.

While we recognize the importance of giving the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) time to complete its full investigation, it is clear that systemic failures within both the Federal Aviation Administration and the U.S. Army contributed to the collision. As painful as it is to know this tragedy could have been prevented, our focus is on understanding exactly what happened and ensuring that the Army implements common-sense safety improvements in coordination with the NTSB's efforts.

The Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, and American Airlines have all engaged with us compassionately and constructively on these issues. In turn, we have given them thoughtful feedback and advocated for substantial improvements that would prevent other families from suffering the way we are now. We believe we have made meaningful progress toward making our skies safer for all through these collaborative efforts.

While this incident did not occur under your watch, your leadership in this moment could help restore public confidence in military aviation safety protocols and set a precedent for how the armed forces respond to U.S. civilian casualties.

Therefore, we were deeply dismayed by your recent testimony at the June 5th hearing before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, where you reaffirmed the Army's troubling stance of refusing to engage with the families of Flight 5342.

The Army's approach contrasts sharply with the more collaborative stance taken by other organizations involved in this incident and raises serious questions about its commitment to transparency and accountability. Our concerns were compounded when the Army withheld its unclassified ADS-B policy memo from Congress, only releasing it under threat of subpoena. Those concerns were deepened by premature and unsubstantiated assertions made by Army leadership to *The New York Times* in April, claiming that ADS-B "played no role in this accident."

The Army later sought to downplay its role in the ensuing May 1 near-misses through a public statement—released on the Friday before Memorial Day—that sidestepped the most troubling facts. It then selectively disclosed investigative details about those near-misses to the *Associated Press* without first disclosing them to the NTSB, as required.

Finally—on the Friday before the Independence Day recess—the Army inspector general informed Congress that it was declining to open an independent audit into the crash, despite formal bipartisan requests signed by 28 Senators, including the leaders of the Senate's main oversight committee.

These actions demonstrate the Army's willingness to circumvent official processes and resist oversight when deflecting scrutiny. At the same time, the Army has cited process while persistently refusing to accept responsibility or even acknowledge the families throughout these ordeals.

In addition to being extremely disheartening to those of us directly affected by the January 29 collision, this troubling pattern also suggests a lack of operational readiness and ongoing risks to our service members.

Given that this is the deadliest incident involving U.S. civilian casualties caused by the military in modern history, the Army has a heightened responsibility to ensure full public transparency and urgent implementation of meaningful safety reforms. The scale of this tragedy demands complete cooperation and accountability from all parties involved—including the U.S. Army.

We respectfully request that you take the following immediate actions:

1. **Appoint a dedicated family liaison** to serve as a direct point of contact between the Army and the Families of Flight 5342
2. **Commit to transparency** by providing regular updates to families about the Army's internal investigation findings and the concrete steps taken to prevent similar incidents

3. **Schedule a meeting** with family representatives within the next 30 days to discuss these requests and establish an ongoing dialogue
4. **Publicly support the inspector general audits requested by Congress**—as Secretary Duffy has done for the FAA—into the Army's role in the accident and encourage public release of findings with only legally required redactions and brief explanations for withheld material

We understand that legal and procedural considerations may complicate engagement with families. However, the unprecedented nature of this tragedy calls for a higher standard of openness, compassion, and leadership worthy of public trust. Other agencies have found ways to engage constructively with us while maintaining the integrity of their investigations. We believe the Army can, and should, do the same.

In short, we are seeking collaboration to prevent future tragedies. While we have suffered an unimaginable loss, our focus is on protecting more families from experiencing the same pain. We believe this is a forward-thinking goal that all parties involved share, and we urge you to join us in taking meaningful steps toward lasting change.

We look forward to your prompt response and to working together on meaningful change that both honors those we lost and upholds the Army's solemn responsibility to the U.S. public.

Respectfully,

Laura Augendre  
Potomac Falls, Virginia  
Cousin of the Livingston Family (Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia)

Kimberly Barncastle  
Marana, Arizona  
Cousin of Michael Stovall  
Military Affiliation: Husband is Layne Barncastle, U.S. Army Sergeant (Retired)

Andrew Beyer  
Aldie, Virginia  
Father of Brielle Magdalena Beyer and Husband to Justyna Magdalena Beyer

Cathy Bieniek  
Delran, New Jersey  
Aunt of Anthony Parente

Joseph Bieniek  
Delran, New Jersey  
Uncle of Anthony Parente

Pamela Blackledge  
Scottsdale, Arizona  
Cousin of Michael Stovall

Robbie Bloom  
New Providence, New Jersey  
Brother of Ian Epstein

Olivia Bresciani  
Franklin, Massachusetts  
Cousin of Christopher Collins

Yuling Cai  
Burlington, Massachusetts  
Wife of Daishen Chen

Rebecca Cesa  
Perkasie, Pennsylvania  
Cousin of Anthony Parente  
Military Affiliation: Both Paternal and Maternal Grandfathers served in the U.S. Navy

Hongling Chen  
Annandale, Virginia  
Family member of Yu Zhou, Kaiyan Mao, and Edward Zhou

Xi Chen  
Fremont, California  
Daughter of Daishen Chen

James Clagett  
Accokeek, Maryland  
Parent of James T. Clagett Jr.

Lydia Coles  
Brattleboro, Vermont  
Fiancée of Samuel Lilley

Bob Collins  
Marion, Massachusetts  
Parent of Christopher M. Collins

Jake Collins  
Boston, Massachusetts  
Cousin of Chris Collins

Jennifer Collins  
North Dighton, Massachusetts  
Sister-in-law of Christopher Collins

Matthew Collins  
North Dighton, Massachusetts  
Brother of Christopher Collins

Nancy Collins  
Marion, Massachusetts  
Parent of Christopher Collins

Richard Collins  
Millis, Massachusetts  
Nephew of Christopher Collins

Ruth Collins  
Millis, Massachusetts  
Aunt of Christopher Collins

Wayne Conrad  
Easton, Pennsylvania  
Parent of Christine Lane and Grandparent of Spencer Lane

Karen Conrad  
Easton, Pennsylvania  
Parent of Christine Lane and Grandparent of Spencer Lane

Richard Crafton  
Norwich, Connecticut  
Father of Casey Laurance Crafton

Rachel Crafton  
Salem, Connecticut  
Wife of Casey Crafton

Christopher Crafton  
Tarrytown, New York  
Brother of Casey Crafton

Sheila Crafton  
Taftville, Connecticut  
Mother of Casey Laurance Crafton

Pete Diaz  
Park City, Kansas  
Father of Pete Jameson (PJ) Diaz

Linda Diaz  
Wichita, Kansas  
Mother of Pete Jameson (PJ) Diaz

Ruth Diaz  
Park City, Kansas  
Step-Parent of Pete Jameson (PJ) Diaz

Gwendolyn Duggins  
Wichita, Kansas  
Parent of Kiah Duggins

Donovan Duggins  
Wichita, Kansas  
Sibling of Kiah Danielle Duggins

Maurice Duggins  
Wichita, Kansas  
Parent of Kiah Duggins

Aisha Duggins  
Wichita, Kansas  
Sister of Kiah Duggins

Christopher Elliott  
Perkasie, Pennsylvania  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

Cindi Elliott  
North Wales, Pennsylvania  
Aunt of Anthony Parente

Amy Griffin Ellis  
Jonesboro, Georgia  
Spouse of James Brian Ellis  
Military Affiliation: U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel

Lila Feldman  
Albany, New York  
Cousin of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

Betty Suter Feldman  
Bozrah, Connecticut  
Aunt of Peter George Livingston and Donna Smojice Livingston, and Great Aunt of Everly Pearl Livingston and Alydia Steele Livingston

Rachel Feres  
Denver, Colorado  
Cousin of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

Emily Gadbois  
Oakdale, Connecticut  
Sister-in-law of Casey Crafton

John Gadbois  
Salem, Connecticut  
Brother-in-law of Casey Crafton

Michael Gadbois  
Oakdale, Connecticut  
Brother-in-law of Casey Crafton



Ruth Gadbois  
Salem, Connecticut  
Mother-in-law of Casey Crafton

Timothy Gant  
Yorktown, Indiana  
Uncle of Pete Jameson (PJ) Diaz  
Military Affiliation: Major, U.S. Army

Carolyn Gant  
Yorktown, Indiana  
Aunt of Pete Jameson (PJ) Diaz

Tiffany Gibson  
Goldsboro, North Carolina  
Sister of First Officer Samuel Lilley  
Military Affiliation: Daughter of Retired Chief Warrant Officer (U.S. Army), Tim Lilley

Rachel Girard  
Newport, Rhode Island  
Niece of Bob and Lori Schrock

Steven Girard  
Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Brother of Lori Schrock and brother-in-law of Robert Schrock

David Gunnell  
Owings, Maryland  
Brother-in-law of Michael B. Stovall

Debra Gunnell  
Mechanicsville, Maryland  
Mother-in-law of Michael B. Stovall

Timothy Gunnell  
Mechanicsville, Maryland  
Father-in-law of Michael B. Stovall

Fridae Hammons  
Cordova, Tennessee  
Sister of Casey Crafton

Taylor Hammons  
Garner, North Carolina  
Nephew of Casey Crafton

Lucille Held  
Napa, California  
Aunt of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

Thomas Holt  
Coconut Creek, Florida  
Uncle of Christopher Collins

Geoffrey Holt  
Rehoboth, Massachusetts  
Uncle of Christopher Collins

Jonathan Holt  
North Dighton, Massachusetts  
Cousin of Christopher Collins

Amy Hunter  
Napa, California  
Cousin of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston  
Military Affiliation: Son is Active-Duty U.S. Army

Altaf Hussain  
Carmel, Indiana  
Parent of Asra Hussain

Noorus Hussain  
Carmel, Indiana  
Parent of Asra Hussain

Robert Lewis Giannini, III  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Cousin of Peter George Livingston, Donna Smojice Livingston, Everly Pearl Livingston, and  
Alydia Steele Livingston

Elaina Johnson  
Wichita, Kansas  
Brother of Pete (PJ) Jameson Diaz

Audrey Keene  
Arlington, Virginia  
Wife of Vikesh Patel

Haley Keene  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Sister-in-law of Vikesh Patel

Matthew Keene  
Hilton, New York  
Father-in-law of Vikesh Patel

Nicole Kerns  
Mount Ephraim, New Jersey  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

Faith Kitchens  
Land O' Lakes, Florida  
Sister of Anthony Parente

Nathaniel Kitchens  
Land O' Lakes, Florida  
Brother-in-law of Anthony Parente

Jenna Knasin  
Canton, Massachusetts  
Sister-in-law of Christine Lane, Aunt of Spencer Lane

Christina Ladislaw  
Delran, New Jersey  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

Amanda Lane  
Canton, Massachusetts  
Sister-in-law of Christine Lane and Aunt of Spencer Lane

Constance Lane  
Fairhaven, Massachusetts  
Mother-in-law of Christine Lane, Grandmother of Spencer Lane

Douglas Lane  
Barrington, Rhode Island  
Husband of Christine Conrad Lane and Father of Spencer Lane

Paul Lane  
Fairhaven, Massachusetts  
Father-in-law of Christine Lane and Grandfather of Spencer Lane  
Military Affiliation: U.S. Air Force Sergeant

Yujia Li  
Fremont, California  
Son-in-law of Daishen Chen

Mark Lilley  
Chester, California  
Uncle of Samuel Lilley

Mary Lilley  
Chester, California  
Aunt of Samuel Lilley

Sheri Lilley  
Savannah, Georgia  
Parent of Samuel Lilley

Timothy Lilley  
Savannah, Georgia  
Father of Samuel Lilley  
Military Affiliation: U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4, Retired

Richard Lindsay  
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Cousin of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

Albert Livingston  
Tampa, Florida  
Brother of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

David Livingston  
Rogers, Arkansas  
Cousin of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

Florence Livingston  
Leesburg, Virginia  
Aunt of Peter, Donna, Alydia, and Everly Livingston

Martha Livingston  
Sandston, Virginia  
Mother of Peter George Livingston, Mother-in-law of Donna Marie Smojice Livingston, and  
Grandmother of Everly Pearl Livingston and Alydia Steele Livingston

Melinda Livingston  
Tampa, Florida  
Sister-in-law of Peter and Donna Livingston, and Aunt of Everly and Alydia Livingston

Shannon Livingston  
Rogers, Arkansas  
Cousin of Peter, Donna, Everly, and Alydia Livingston

Sterling Livingston  
Sandston, Virginia  
Father of Peter Livingston, Father-in-law of Donna Livingston, and Grandfather of Everly  
Livingston and Alydia Livingston  
Military Affiliation: U.S. Army Lieutenant, Retired

Rosemary Livingston-Olds  
Round Hill, Virginia  
Cousin of Peter Livingston, Donna Livingston, Everly Livingston, Alydia Livingston

Crystal Lucero  
Montgomery, Texas  
Cousin of Michael Stovall  
Military Affiliation: U.S. Army E-5 Spouse (Retired)

Jennifer Lydon  
Medway, Massachusetts  
Cousin of Christopher Collins

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Boyfriend of Kiah Duggins

Kimberly Macpherson  
Bartlett, Tennessee  
Aunt of Casey L. Crafton

Brienna Malocu  
Chesapeake, Virginia  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

Kaiying Mao  
Fairfax, Virginia  
Sister of Kaiyan Mao, Sister-in-law of Yu Zhou, and Aunt of Edward Zhou

Dean Maxwell  
Wichita, Kansas  
Father of Grace Maxwell

Merav Maxwell  
Wichita, Kansas  
Mother of Grace Maxwell

Mike Mclean  
Washington, District of Columbia  
Best friend of Anthony Parente

Donna Moxley  
White Plains, Maryland  
Aunt of Michael Bret Stovall

Harry Moxley  
White Plains, Maryland  
Uncle of Michael Bret Stovall

Paul Nicandri  
Arlington, Virginia  
Uncle of Melissa Jane Nicandri

Jiawen Ouyang  
Sterling, Virginia  
Niece of Yu Zhou and Kaiyan Mao, Cousin of Edward Zhou

Gianni Parente  
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Cousin of Anthony Parente

Grace Parente  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Aunt of Anthony Parente

John Parente  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Uncle of Anthony Parente

Justin Parente  
Davenport, Florida  
Brother of Anthony Parente



Kasie Parente  
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Cousin of Anthony Parente

Renee Parente  
Kissimmee, Florida  
Mother of Anthony Parente

Valentina Parente  
Bellmawr, New Jersey  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

William Parente  
Kissimmee, Florida  
Father of Anthony Parente

Anil Patel  
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Brother-in-law of Vikesh D. Patel

Davis Patel  
Maryland  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Dhanisha Patel  
Dallas, Texas  
Brother of Vikesh Patel

Feneel Patel  
Reston, Virginia  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Hasmukh Patel  
Elkton, Maryland  
Nephew of Vikesh D. Patel

Jayesh Patel  
London, United Kingdom  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Jenees Patel  
Georgia  
Brother of Vikesh Patel

Mahesh Patel  
London, United Kingdom  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Niketa Patel-Surti  
Leicester, United Kingdom  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Nita Patel  
Dover, Delaware  
Cousin of Vikesh D. Patel

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Austin, Texas  
Sister-in-law of Vikesh Patel

Ramila Patel  
Havre Delaware Grace, Maryland  
Mother of Vikesh Patel

Rashmika Patel  
Harve Delaware Grace, Maryland  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Shruti Patel  
Albany, New York  
Uncle of Vikesh Patel

Kylie Pitcher  
Lusby, Maryland  
Husband of Jesse Pitcher

Belinda Prewitt  
Lusby, Maryland  
Wife of Robert Prewitt

Kristen Punch  
Hingham, Massachusetts  
Cousin of Christopher Collins

Beau Rauch  
Washington, District of Columbia  
Family member of Inna Volyanskaya

Asim Raza  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Niece of Asra Hussain

Asma Raza  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Mother-in-Law of Asra Hussain  
Military Affiliation: Air Force Mom

Farhan Raza  
Kansas City, Kansas  
Brother-in-law of Asra Hussain  
Military Affiliation: U.S. Air Force Captain (Honorable Discharge)

Hamaad Raza  
Washington, District of Columbia  
Husband of Asra Hussain

Hashim Raza  
St Louis, Missouri  
Father-in-law of Asra Hussain Raza

Saad Raza  
Columbia, Missouri  
Brother-in-law of Asra Hussain

Dylan Roberts  
Lusby, Maryland  
Son of Robert Prewitt

Ben Shtuhl  
New York, New York  
Partner of Melissa Jane Nicandri

Lily Shtuhl  
New York City, New York  
Sister-in-law of Melissa Nicandri

Elizabeth Slarb  
Carlisle, South Carolina  
Aunt of Mike Stovall

Daniel Solomon  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Spouse of Sarah Best

Masha Spiridonova  
District of Columbia  
Daughter of Inna Volyanskaya

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Aidan Steene  
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Cousin of Anthony Parente

Jim Steene  
Moorestown, New Jersey  
Uncle of Anthony Parente

Luke Steene  
Moorestown, New Jersey  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

Rachelle Steene  
Moorestown, New Jersey  
Aunt of Anthony Parente

John Stephan  
Oakdale, Connecticut  
Brother-in-law of Casey Crafton

Kelly Stephan  
Oakdale, Connecticut  
Sister-in-law of Casey Crafton

Christina Stovall  
Nokomis, Florida  
Mother of Michael Bret Stovall

Michael Lewis Stovall  
Nokomis, Florida  
Father of Michael Bret Stovall

Ashlea Sullivan  
South Burlington, Vermont  
Sister-in-law of Vikesh Patel

Cory Sullivan  
Burlington Vermont  
Brother-in-law of Vikesh Patel

Nitin Surti  
Leicester, United Kingdom  
Cousin of Vikesh Patel

Rio Taganas-Malabed  
Laguna, Philippines  
Spouse of Pergentino Noble Malabed, Jr.

Christiane Telaak  
Germany  
Partner of Lars Ræder Clausen

Jennifer Thomas  
New York, New York  
Spouse of Christopher Collins

Laura Torres  
Washington, District of Columbia  
Fiancée of Anthony Parente

Lindsey Vasques  
Mount Ephraim, New Jersey  
Cousin of Anthony Parente

Shirley Wentzell-Keene  
Hilton, New York  
Mother-in-Law of Vikesh Patel

Mackenzie Williford  
Memphis, Tennessee  
Niece of Casey Crafton

Kathleen Wolfanger  
Manlius, New York  
Sister of Christine Conrad Lane and Aunt of Spencer Lane

Jianjun Wu  
Middletown, Delaware  
Husband of Zheheng Li and Father of Angela Yang

Xuan Yang  
Fairfax, Virginia  
Family member of Yu Zhou, Kaiyan Mao, and Edward Zhou

Kristen Miller Zahn  
California  
Sibling of Dustin Miller

Jin Zhou  
Annandale, Virginia  
Brother of Yu Zhou, Brother-in-law of Kaiyan Mao, and Uncle of Edward Zhou

Kevin Zhou  
Michigan  
Nephew of Yu Zhou and Kaiyan Mao, Cousin of Edward Zhou

Sally Zhou  
Annandale, Virginia  
Niece of Yu Zhou and Kaiyan Mao, Cousin of Edward Zhou

Wen Zhou  
Fairfax, Virginia  
Sister of Yu Zhou, Sister-in-law of Kaiyan Mao, and Aunt of Edward Zhou