



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L58 (0120)

FEB - 4 2004

The Honorable David Price
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Price:

This responds to your December 16, 2003, letter to me and your January 21, 2004, letter to Secretary Gale Norton regarding the placement of U.S. Park Police Chief Teresa Chambers on administrative leave. I would like to thank you for your patience as we prepared the information you requested. My Deputy Director, Donald Murphy, who oversees the United States Park Police (USPP), and my Congressional Affairs Office have worked together on this matter and the response to your two letters.

Let me assure you that neither the National Park Service (NPS) nor the Department of the Interior has begun disciplinary proceedings against any employee who has appropriately alleged in public or before Congress any lack of resources necessary to "... maintain law and order and protect property within the NPS." As you perhaps know, Ms. Teresa Chambers has responded in writing to Deputy Assistant Secretary Paul Hoffman. Mr. Hoffman is the reviewing official in this personnel matter and is in the midst of this process as of this writing.

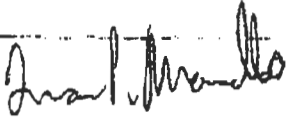
You also asked about information regarding "... the impact that round-the-clock patrols of our national monuments have had on the availability of Park Police to carry out other aspects of their law enforcement mission." When there is a heightened state of alert, officers are reassigned to protect such national icons as the Statue of Liberty, the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial or the Lincoln Memorial. In addition, we have responsibilities at both anchorages of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, as these areas lie within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Currently, we are meeting these needs with little or no use of overtime. The result is reduced visibility of uniformed personnel in certain parks. Plainclothes tactical units are also pressed into uniformed duty at the icons, further reducing our general crime fighting capability. The numbers of officers protecting these sites is law enforcement sensitive.

I want to assure you that the Department is affording Chief Chambers due process, in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the United States. You may rest assured

she will receive full and fair consideration in her case. As you are no doubt aware, the Department does not wish to compromise either its position in a personnel matter, nor jeopardize the rights of employees in such matters by trying those matters in the press or before Congress. As mentioned earlier, this decision now rests with Paul Hoffman, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

Thank you for your continued interest in the National Park Service and for giving us the opportunity to respond to you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Fran P. Mainella
Director