



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L58 (0120)

MAY - 5 2004

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box  
,

Dear Mr. :

Thank you for your inquiry of March 9, 2004, to Secretary Gale A. Norton regarding the placement of U.S. Park Police Chief Teresa Chambers on administrative leave. Your letter was forwarded to our Legislative and Congressional Affairs office for our response. We apologize for the delay in our response, but hope you find the information provided useful.

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, the Office of Special Counsel (OSC) asked the Department to voluntarily stay its decision while it conducts an investigation into allegations Ms. Chambers made in a complaint she filed at OSC. The Department has agreed to the voluntary stay and is cooperating with the OSC in its investigation.

We understand that there have been questions concerning 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 assigned 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 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. 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.

Your continued support of the National Park Service is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. K. Taylor', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Jeffrey K. Taylor  
Assistant Director  
Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs