

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-6906  
judiciary.house.gov

October 1, 2024

Mr. Carlton Peeples  
Special Agent in Charge  
Birmingham Field Office  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
1000 18th Street North,  
Birmingham, AL 35203

Dear Mr. Peeples:

On April 5, 2024, we wrote to you requesting certain documents and communications related to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) handling of its investigation into the disappearance and murder of Natalee Holloway and the subsequent extortion of her mother, Beth Holloway.<sup>1</sup> On August 20, 2024, the FBI provided an incomplete response, which failed to include responsive documents.<sup>2</sup> We write to reiterate our requests.

The FBI's August 20 letter indicates that the Bureau possesses documents responsive to our requests. For example, the FBI asserted that in April 2010, it led a joint investigation with Aruban authorities into the extortion of Natalee's mother, Beth,<sup>3</sup> yet it provided no documents or communications relating to this investigation. The FBI also claimed it reviewed information, including satellite imagery, and interviewed individuals relating to the false location that her murderer, Joran van der Sloot, claimed to have buried Natalee, but again failed to produce any of these documents.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the FBI claimed that "while [they] were aware that van der Sloot traveled to Peru, the FBI could not restrict van der Sloot's movements and activities in Peru," as this was just prior to them having "actionable evidence" to file a federal complaint and indictment against van der Sloot in this matter.<sup>5</sup> However, the FBI failed to provide any documentation reflecting the FBI's knowledge of van der Sloot's movements, activities, or the evidence available to the FBI at the time of van der Sloot's travel.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Carlton Peeples, FBI (Apr. 5, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Letter from, Patrick Findlay, FBI, to Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary (Aug. 20, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

Mr. Carlton Peeples

October 1, 2024

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Accordingly, the Committee reiterates its requests contained in the April 5 letter, enclosed herein. Please provide the requested documents and information as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 15, 2024. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "D".

Jim Jordan  
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member

Enclosure

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

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## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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April 5, 2024

Mr. Carlton Peeples  
Special Agent in Charge  
Birmingham Field Office  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
1000 18th Street North  
Birmingham, AL 35203

Dear Mr. Peeples:

On October 18, 2023, Joran van der Sloot pleaded guilty to one count extortion and one count of wire fraud relating to a 2010 scheme to reveal to Beth Holloway the location of her missing daughter, Natalee, in exchange for \$250,000.<sup>1</sup> We are pleased that van der Sloot will finally face justice for his crimes; however, we have received information that the FBI missed an opportunity to apprehend van der Sloot in 2010. As the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Birmingham Field Office, we request your assistance with our oversight.

In May 2005, Natalee Holloway accompanied her classmates on a graduation trip to Aruba.<sup>2</sup> She was last seen on May 30 leaving a nightclub with van der Sloot.<sup>3</sup> Five years later, van der Sloot attempted to extort money from Beth Holloway in exchange for the location of Ms. Holloway's remains and details about her death.<sup>4</sup> According to information available to the Committee, John Kelly, the Holloways' attorney, reported this extortion attempt to the FBI's Birmingham field office. The FBI organized a sting operation to surveil the money transfer and apprehend van der Sloot. On May 10, 2010, Beth Holloway wired \$15,000 to van der Sloot and Mr. Kelly provided an additional \$10,000 to him in cash in a hotel in Aruba.<sup>5</sup> After the transfer of funds, the FBI assured Mr. Kelly that van der Sloot was under around-the-clock surveillance.

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<sup>1</sup> See Binding Plea Agreement, ECF No. 42, *United States of America v. van der Sloot*, No. 2:10-cr-00237-AMM-GMB (S.D. Al. Oct. 18, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Claire Moses & Christine Hauser, *Confession Brings Natalee Holloway Case to an End After 18 Years*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (Oct. 18, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

Mr. Carlton Peeples

April 5, 2024

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On May 30, 2010, van der Sloot murdered 21-year-old Stephany Flores in a hotel room in Peru.<sup>6</sup> He apparently checked into this hotel on May 14 while he was allegedly under FBI surveillance.

We believe the Birmingham Field Office may possess documents that shed light on how the FBI missed the opportunity to apprehend van der Sloot in 2010. To assist the Committee in conducting our oversight, please provide the following information:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to the 2010 sting operation in Aruba relating to Joran van der Sloot's attempted extortion of Beth Holloway; and
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to the FBI's surveillance of Joran van der Sloot in or around May 2010, including the FBI's awareness of van der Sloot's international travels.

Please provide the documents and information responsive to each request in this letter as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 19, 2024.

The Committee on the Judiciary has oversight jurisdiction over the Department of Justice and the FBI pursuant to Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives.<sup>7</sup> If you have any questions about this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan  
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member

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<sup>6</sup> Alisha Ebrahimji, *How the search for answers has unfolded since Natalee Holloway vanished in 2005*, CNN (Oct. 18, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Rules of the House of Representatives R. X (2023).