



WV Democratic Party Calls on Governor Morrisey to Clarify Mission of WV National Guard Deployment to Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2025

The West Virginia Democratic Party today called on Governor Patrick Morrisey to clarify the scope and purpose of the ongoing deployment of West Virginia National Guard personnel to Washington, D.C., particularly in light of multiple public reports documenting that Guard units — including those from West Virginia — have been assigned to landscaping, beautification, and trash-removal duties in the nation’s capital.

West Virginia Democratic Party Chair Mike Pushkin said, “West Virginians deserve answers, which is why we are calling on Governor Morrisey to explain how these duties align with the crime fighting mission he and the Trump administration outlined to the public as the original rationale for deploying these troops to Washington, D.C. Respectfully, West Virginians deserve to know whether this deployment was designed primarily for public safety or whether our Guard was assigned work far outside its traditional responsibilities while putting themselves in harm’s way.”

These questions arise at a difficult moment for Guard families across the state. Two members of the West Virginia National Guard were recently shot while deployed in Washington, D.C., and one tragically lost her life. The Party expresses its deepest condolences to their families, friends, and fellow service members and asks all West Virginians to keep them in their prayers.

In raising the following concerns, the Party emphasizes its profound respect for the service and sacrifice of every Guard member.

Recent reporting shows that Guard members deployed to D.C. — including those who volunteered to extend their tours — were directed to perform extensive “beautification” duties. According to *Military Times*, troops assigned to the D.C. mission have:

- Cleared **1,150 bags of trash**,
- Spread **1,045 cubic yards of mulch**,
- Removed **50 truckloads of plant waste**,
- Cleared **7.9 miles of roadway**,
- Painted **270 feet of fencing**, and



- Pruned **400 trees**.

Additional reporting from [PBS NewsHour](#) confirms that Guard members have been tasked with “*landscaping, picking up trash*” during their D.C. deployment. [NBC Washington](#) likewise reported that Guard troops were sent to “*pick up trash in D.C. and work on beautification projects.*” [The Guardian](#) further described Guard personnel engaging in trash clearing, graffiti removal, and other parks-maintenance work.

These reports stand in sharp contrast to the Trump Administration’s explanation of the deployment as necessary to address an “epidemic of crime” in D.C. The Administration further explained that the President has a “solemn duty to protect law-abiding citizens from the destructive forces of criminal activity,” ensure that “all citizens can avail themselves of the right to interact with their elected representatives” without fear of street crime, and that “the Federal Government can properly function ... without fear of being subjected to violent, menacing street crime.” Likewise, Governor Morrisey has also described the mission of the West Virginia National Guard to D.C. as “protecting our nation’s capital.”

West Virginia Democratic Party Chair Mike Pushkin said, “Our National Guard members represent the best of West Virginia. They go where they are sent, without complaint, and they serve with honor. That is why the loss of one of our Guard members in D.C. is so painful for our entire state. In light of recent reporting, West Virginians deserve clarity. If these brave men and women were allegedly deployed to protect the public from violent crime, why were so many of them directed to perform landscaping, trash removal, and beautification work — tasks normally handled by the National Park Service or city workers?”

“This is not about politics — it’s about accountability, transparency, and honoring the sacrifice of our Guard members. Their work should always match the seriousness of the risks they face. At a moment when families are grieving and communities are asking hard questions, it is entirely appropriate for the Governor to explain the true nature and purpose of this deployment.”

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