



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 11, 2025

Dear Speaker Johnson:

On behalf of the Department of Justice (Department), we are pleased to present for the consideration of the Congress a legislative proposal to amend 18 U.S.C. § 981(b) and 21 U.S.C. § 853(f).

Transnational criminal organizations and their leaders often maintain significant illicit assets, including proceeds of U.S. crimes, in foreign countries. The United States has authority to seize these illicit assets with the assistance of our foreign legal partners, through mutual legal assistance requests. But foreign countries often require a formal seizure warrant from a U.S. court in order to preserve these assets for recovery. Currently, it is unclear whether a U.S. court can issue a seizure warrant for assets located in a foreign country.

This proposal would clarify that U.S. courts can, upon a determination of probable cause, issue a seizure warrant in criminal cases so that, consistent with existing procedures, we can use mutual legal assistance to preserve illicit assets abroad. The proposal would also make a conforming change to the relevant statute to more accurately reflect the practice of foreign governments in the execution of U.S. requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our proposal. The Office of Management and Budget has advised us that from the perspective of the Administration's program, there is no objection to the submission of this proposal to Congress. We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and would welcome the opportunity to address your questions and provide technical assistance on any language you might consider.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald J. Lampard".

Ronald J. Lampard
Deputy Assistant Attorney General

Enclosure

The Honorable Mike Johnson
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cc:

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515