

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 15, 2019

The Honorable William P. Barr
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Robert F. Kennedy Building
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Barr:

Just over four weeks ago, Jeffrey Epstein was arrested by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents and New York Police Department (NYPD) Crimes Against Children Task Force officers after he was indicted for committing a slew of heinous acts, including molestation, abuse of underage girls, and sex trafficking of minors.¹ Numerous victims looked forward to seeing Mr. Epstein face justice. Yet, on August 10, Mr. Epstein allegedly hanged himself in his cell at the Bureau of Prisons' (BOP) Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) facility in Manhattan.²

This week, you revealed that there were “serious irregularities” at the MCC.³ We agree. According to press reports, corrections officers violated protocol by not checking on Mr. Epstein regularly even though he had previously been placed on suicide watch.⁴ Additionally, one of the individuals assigned to watch Mr. Epstein did not normally work as a corrections officer.⁵ The MCC “is functioning with less than 70 percent of the needed correctional officers, forcing many”—including the two individuals watching Mr. Epstein—“to work mandatory overtime and 60- or 70-hour work weeks.”⁶

¹ Pervaiz Shallwani, Kate Briquet and Harry Siegel, *Jeffrey Epstein Arrested for Sex Trafficking of Minors*, Daily Beast, Jul. 6, 2019, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/jeffrey-epstein-arrested-for-sex-trafficking-of-minors-source>.

² Doug Stanglin and Kevin McCoy, *Disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein, awaiting sex trafficking charges, dead of apparent suicide*, USA Today, Aug. 10, 2019, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/08/10/jeffrey-epstein-found-dead-jail-cell-apparent-suicide-media-reports/1975052001/>.

³ Pete Williams, Jonathan Dienst, & Rich Schapiro, *Jail where Jeffrey Epstein died had 'serious irregularities,' AG Barr says*, NBC News, Aug. 12, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/jail-where-jeffrey-epstein-died-had-serious-irregularities-ag-barr-n1041421> (“NBC News (Aug. 12, 2019)”).

⁴ Matt Zapposky & Devlin Barrett, *Corrections officers did not check on Epstein for 'several' hours before his death, violating protocol, person familiar with case says*, Wash. Post, Aug. 11, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/it-was-inevitable-officers-watching-epstein-were-on-overtime-due-to-jail-staffing-shortage-union-president-says/2019/08/11/2b611404-bc5e-11e9-a5c6-1e74f7ec4a93_story.html.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

You confirmed that both the FBI and the Department of Justice's Inspector General are investigating, and you promised that "there will be accountability."⁷ We fully support your call for a thorough investigation of the circumstances surrounding Mr. Epstein's death. True accountability, however, especially for the victims of Mr. Epstein, requires full transparency. For that reason, we ask for your commitment to make the results of the FBI and IG investigations public as soon as they are completed. We also ask that you please keep us informed of the progress of these investigations so we can ensure that these problems are swiftly addressed and corrected.

Sincerely,



Ron Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on Finance

cc: The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General

⁷ NBC News (Aug. 12, 2019).