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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

DAVID M. WEINBERG, STAFF DIRECTOR
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LAURA W. KILBRIDE, CHIEF CLERK

March 9, 2021

The Honorable Robert Fairweather
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Fairweather:

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is investigating the federal government's response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Senator Peters previously notified this Department on November 18, 2020 to preserve all documents and communications, including regarding the government's COVID-19 response. In addition, Senator Peters sent this Department a request for documents and information on December 21, 2020 related to its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter reasserts that request.

The United States remains in the midst of a national and public health security crisis. More than a half million Americans have died from COVID-19 since the first cases were detected in the United States.¹ In addition, the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office found that “[a]s of December 2020, there were more than 10.7 million unemployed individuals, compared to nearly 5.8 million individuals at the beginning of the calendar year,” and further warned the “pandemic will likely remain a significant obstacle to more robust economic activity.”² The federal government's response has a decisive impact on efforts to save lives, restore the economy, and overcome the pandemic.

These deaths are unacceptable. The economic fallout must also be remedied. As such, we must examine and understand the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and any needed reforms to combat this and future pandemics. This includes understanding decisions regarding testing, distribution of medical supplies, and communications with the public, as well as answering questions surrounding public health, military, and intelligence warnings about the pandemic and potential political interference with scientific guidance. The Committee is authorized by Rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate to investigate “the efficiency and economy of operations of all branches of the Government.” To that end, please provide the following documents and communications as soon as possible, but no later than March 29, 2021:

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *United States COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by State* (https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days).

² Government Accountability Office, *COVID-19: Critical Vaccine Distribution, Supply Chain, Program Integrity, and Other Challenges Require Focused Federal Attention* (GAO-21-265) (January 28, 2021).

Executive Branch Actions and Guidance to the Public

1. All communications and documents provided to the White House Coronavirus Task Force or the White House COVID-19 Response Team and executive agencies referring or relating to budget projections for resources in response to COVID-19, January 2020 through present.
2. All draft CDC guidance referring or relating to COVID-19, both as submitted to OMB and, where applicable, as publicly released.
3. All documents and communications referring or relating to funding for projects affiliated with the World Health Organization (WHO).
4. All organizational charts at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) referring or relating to the COVID-19 response.
5. All documents and communications referring or relating to COVID-19 requested by or provided to transition teams.
6. All documents and communications referring or relating to national pandemic preparedness plans or procedures from January 2013 through present.

COVID-19 Testing and Vaccines

7. All draft FDA guidance pertaining to Emergency Use Authorization for COVID-19 testing, therapeutics, and vaccines, both as submitted to OMB and, where applicable, as publicly released.
8. All documents and communications referring or relating to funding disbursements to states, Tribes, territories, and localities for testing and vaccine distribution, January 2020 through present.

Additionally, we ask that you make any officials with relevant information available for interviews to provide information and testimony regarding the issues identified herein.

Please refer to the attached Schedule A for information on how to respond to this request and for the types of documents and communications to be provided. Unless otherwise indicated, all documents and communications responsive to these requests should be provided from January 2019 to present.

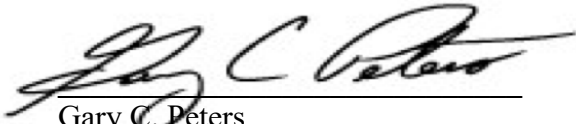
The Honorable Robert Fairweather

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Thank you for your prompt attention and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary C. Peters", written over a horizontal line.

Gary C. Peters
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Portman", written over a horizontal line.

Rob Portman
Ranking Member