

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051

MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

Mr. Sean W. O'Donnell
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

Dear Acting Inspector General O'Donnell:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Defense for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

¹ See, e.g., Letter from Internal Revenue Service Human Capital Officer to Internal Revenue Service Employees, *Face Coverings to Be Required in Internal Revenue Service Facilities and Workplaces* (Apr. 24, 2020) (online at <https://waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/democrats.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/documents/IRS%20PPE%20email.pdf>).

² Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (Apr. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2020-04-29.GEC%20to%20Rigas-%20OPM%20re%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>); Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on

and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of department access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

In addition, we request an investigation into the tragic death of Chai Suthammanont, a constituent of mine who contracted and died of the novel coronavirus while working as part of the kitchen staff at Marine Corps Base Quantico Child Development Center South. Chai is one of the many frontline federal employees whose jobs required them to continue working onsite

Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

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Mr. Sean W. O'Donnell

Page 3

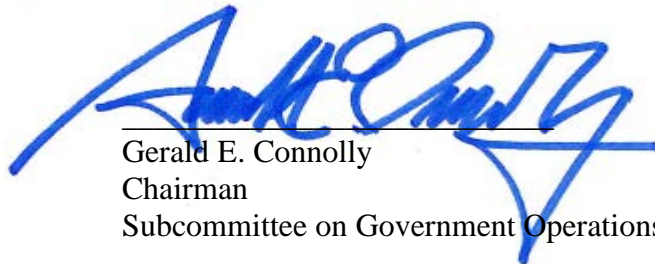
through the coronavirus pandemic. It is critical that we investigate whether the health and safety protocols at Quantico may have contributed to Chai's death, in particular regarding policy disparities between different employees at the center, and how we can avoid future losses of life as we move to reopen federal workstations.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Please contact Subcommittee staff at (202) 225-5051 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

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June 15, 2020

The Honorable Allison C. Lerner
Inspector General
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Inspector General Lerner:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the National Science Foundation for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

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The Honorable Allison C. Lerner

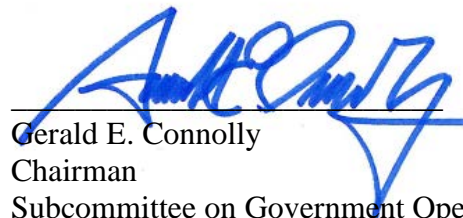
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Gerald E. Connolly
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June 15, 2020

The Honorable Paul K. Martin
Inspector General
U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
300 E Street, S.W.
Code W, Room 8V69
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dear Inspector General Martin:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

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Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your agency's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your agency's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

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The Honorable Paul K. Martin

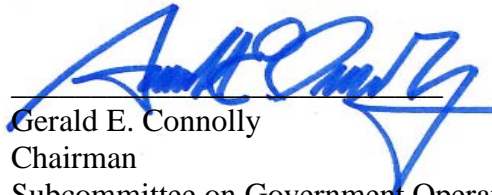
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Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
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June 15, 2020

Mr. Stephen J. Akard
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of State
1700 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Acting Inspector General Akard:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of State for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

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Mr. Stephen J. Akard

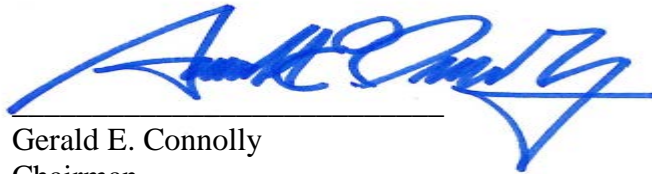
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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly

Chairman

Subcommittee on Government Operations

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MINORITY (202) 225-5074
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June 15, 2020

The Honorable Ann Calvaresi Barr
Inspector General
United States Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20523

Dear Inspector General Barr:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the United States Agency for International Development for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

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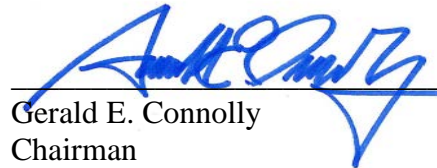
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June 15, 2020

Ms. Sandra D. Bruce
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Acting Inspector General Bruce:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Education for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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² Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (Apr. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2020-04-29.GEC%20to%20Rigas-%20OPM%20re%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>); Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on

and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of department access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
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- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

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Ms. Sandra D. Bruce

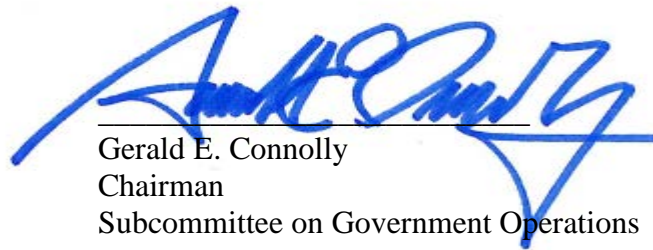
Page 3

procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Joseph V. Cuffari
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Inspector General Cuffari:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

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Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

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- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
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The Honorable Joseph V. Cuffari

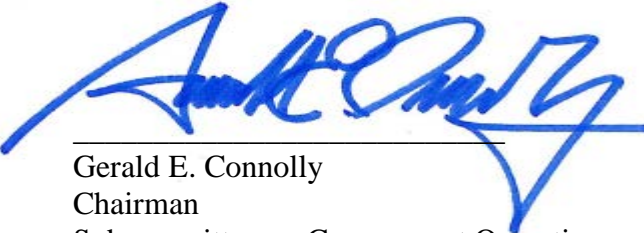
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Scott S. Dahl
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Inspector General Dahl:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Labor for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

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- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

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The Honorable Scott S. Dahl

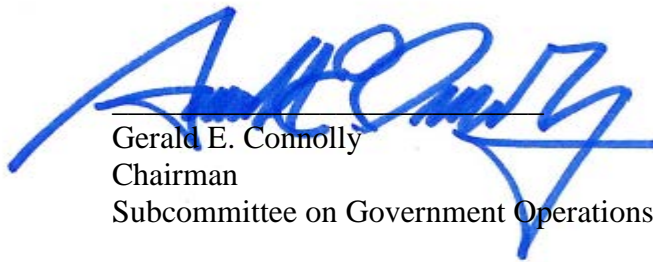
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Rae Oliver Davis
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Inspector General Davis:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

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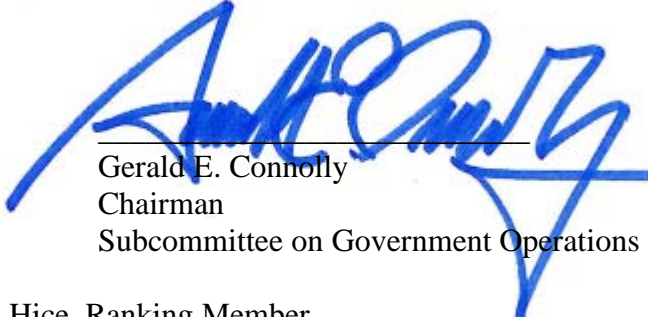
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

Ms. Christi A. Grimm
Principal Deputy Inspector General
Department of Health and Human Services
330 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Principal Deputy Inspector General Grimm:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the Department of Health and Human Services for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

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Ms. Christi A. Grimm

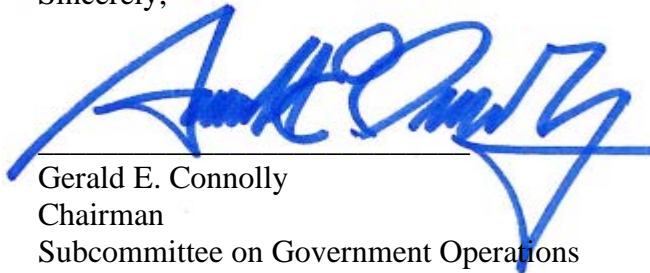
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Gerald E. Connolly
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Subcommittee on Government Operations

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COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
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<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

Mr. Richard K. Delmar
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Acting Inspector General Delmar:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of the Treasury for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

¹ See, e.g., Letter from Internal Revenue Service Human Capital Officer to Internal Revenue Service Employees, *Face Coverings to Be Required in Internal Revenue Service Facilities and Workplaces* (Apr. 24, 2020) (online at <https://waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/democrats.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/documents/IRS%20PPE%20email.pdf>).

² Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (Apr. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2020-04-29.GEC%20to%20Rigas-%20OPM%20re%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>); Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on

and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of department access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

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⁴ Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management, *Aligning Federal Agency Operations with the National Guidelines for Opening Up America Again* (Apr. 26, 2020) (online at www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/M-20-23.pdf).

Mr. Richard K. Delmar

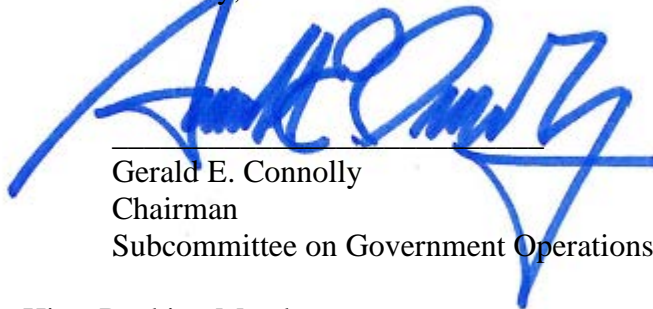
Page 3

procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerald E. Connolly", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and extends above and below the line.

Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Teri L. Donaldson
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Inspector General Donaldson:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Energy for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
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The Honorable Teri L. Donaldson

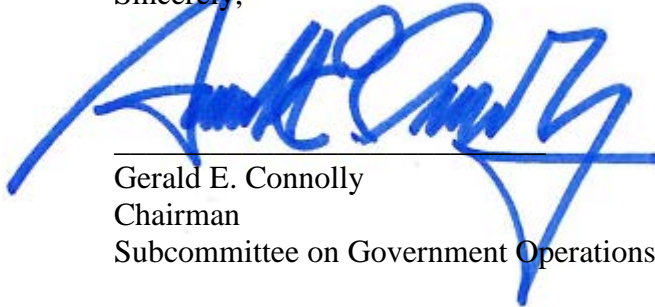
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerald E. Connolly", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

Mr. Howard R. Elliott
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Acting Inspector General Elliot:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Transportation for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
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- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and

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Mr. Howard R. Elliott

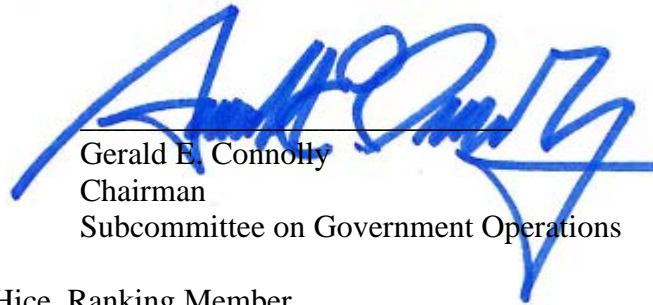
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Gail S. Ennis
Inspector General
U.S. Social Security Administration
1100 West High Rise
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21207

Dear Inspector General Ennis:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Social Security Administration for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your agency's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your agency's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

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- Assessment of agency protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of interagency collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of agency policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and

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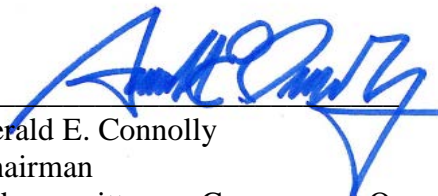
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dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly

Chairman

Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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MAJORITY (202) 225-5051

MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Robert J. Feitel
Inspector General
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Inspector General Feitel:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

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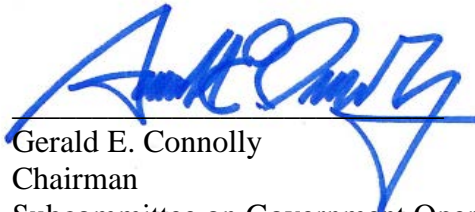
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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Phyllis K. Fong
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Room 117-W Jamie Whitten Bldg
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Inspector General Fong:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

¹ See, e.g., Letter from Internal Revenue Service Human Capital Officer to Internal Revenue Service Employees, *Face Coverings to Be Required in Internal Revenue Service Facilities and Workplaces* (Apr. 24, 2020) (online at <https://waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/democrats.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/documents/IRS%20PPE%20email.pdf>).

² Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (Apr. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2020-04-29.GEC%20to%20Rigas->

and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of department access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and

%20OPM%20re%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf); Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

³ Letter from Russell T. Vaught, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, and Michael Rigas, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Personnel Management, to Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations (June 2, 2020) (online at https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Connolly_0.pdf).

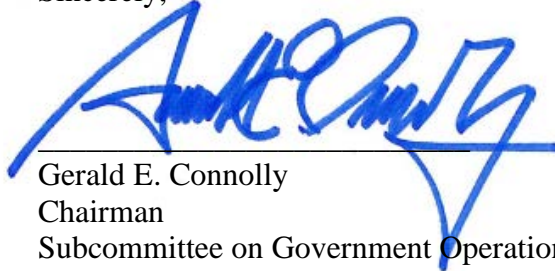
⁴ Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management, *Aligning Federal Agency Operations with the National Guidelines for Opening Up America Again* (Apr. 26, 2020) (online at www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/M-20-23.pdf).

dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. Please contact Subcommittee staff at (202) 225-5051 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Mark Lee Greenblatt
Inspector General
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Inspector General Greenblatt:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of the Interior for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of department access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

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The Honorable Mark Lee Greenblatt

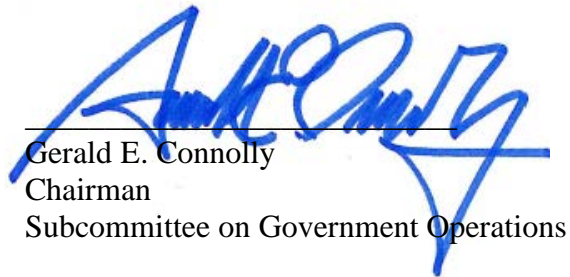
Page 3

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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Peggy E. Gustafson
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Inspector General Gustafson:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Commerce for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of department office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
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- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

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The Honorable Peggy E. Gustafson

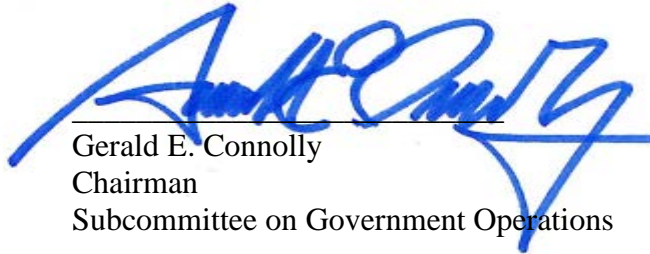
Page 3

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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Inspector General Horowitz:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Justice for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that department officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
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- Assessment of department protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

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The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz

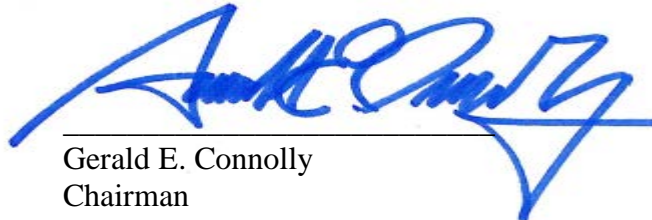
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly

Chairman

Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Michael J. Missal
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 204201

Dear Inspector General Missal:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some departments have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your department and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your department's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your department's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

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- Evaluation of inter-department collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of department policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

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The Honorable Michael J. Missal

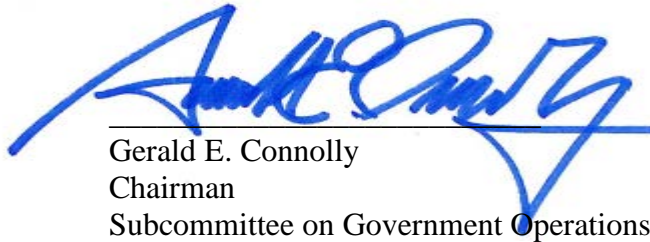
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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers are at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051

MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Carol F. Ochoa
Inspector General
U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Inspector General Ochoa:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. General Services Administration for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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² Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (Apr. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2020-04-29.GEC%20to%20Rigas-%20OPM%20re%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>); Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on

and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your agency's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your agency's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that agency officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of agency office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of agency access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
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- Evaluation of interagency collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of agency policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (May 15, 2020) (online at https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/gec_letter_to_rigas_and_vought_fed_reopening.pdf).

³ Letter from Russell T. Vaught, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, and Michael Rigas, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Personnel Management, to Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations (June 2, 2020) (online at https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Connolly_0.pdf).

⁴ Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management, *Aligning Federal Agency Operations with the National Guidelines for Opening Up America Again* (Apr. 26, 2020) (online at www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/M-20-23.pdf).

The Honorable Carol F. Ochoa

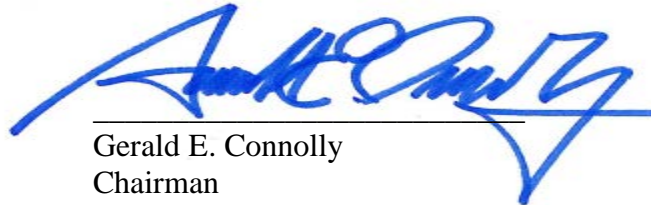
Page 3

procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers is at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. Please contact Subcommittee staff at (202) 225-5051 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly

Chairman

Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Sean W. O'Donnell
Inspector General
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Inspector General O'Donnell:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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² Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on Government Operations, to Michael Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management (Apr. 29, 2020) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2020-04-29.GEC%20to%20Rigas-%20OPM%20re%20Reopening%20Guidance.pdf>); Letter from Chairman Gerald E. Connolly, Subcommittee on

and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your agency's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your agency's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that agency officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
- Baseline metrics on various important indicators that will allow for future examination of agency office re-opening plans, including the number of employees who contract the coronavirus;
- Assessment of agency access to appropriate volumes of critical resources, including reliable coronavirus tests, personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, soap and warm water, workplace dividers, and disinfectant;
- Assessment of agency protocols for when an employee tests positive for coronavirus;
- Evaluation of interagency collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of agency policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and dangerous of circumstances. In return, federal management officials must employ the safest

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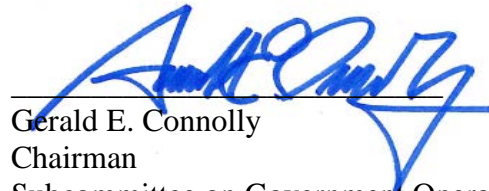
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procedures in determining whether and when employees should return to their offices. We need to ensure that premature or misguided efforts to return to offices will not undercut efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus and put federal employees and their families in danger.

Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers is at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

Mr. Norbert E. Vint
Acting Inspector General
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

Dear Acting Inspector General Vint:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and OPM raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on

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June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request and failed to address concerns raised in our letters regarding the provision of personal protective equipment and coronavirus testing in federal workplaces.³

This Administration's unwillingness to demonstrate sufficient concern about the health and welfare of our federal workforce makes your job even more vital to our nation.

Given the many shortcomings identified in the Administration's reopening guidelines, as well as the Administration's unwillingness to engage in even minimal oversight of its abysmal response to the coronavirus pandemic, we request that you carefully oversee and review your agency's actions in this area. Specifically, we ask that you review agreed-upon best practices for safe, healthy, and effective office re-openings from both governmental and non-governmental experts. We request that you use these resources to develop an assessment plan to review your agency's office reopening efforts.⁴ This assessment plan could include:

- Methodology to assess whether actions that agency officials take to require employees to return to federal offices are based on evidence and research and meet best practices and guidance;
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- Evaluation of interagency collaboration, especially with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to ensure re-opening plans are consistent with public health and worker safety guidelines; and
- Any additional information or data that will facilitate a thorough assessment of agency policies and actions at this critical juncture.

Millions of federal employees and contractors will be affected by the Administration's decisions to return federal employees to federal offices. Our federal workforce has demonstrated that it can continue to work effectively and serve this nation—even in the most difficult and

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Mr. Norbert E. Vint

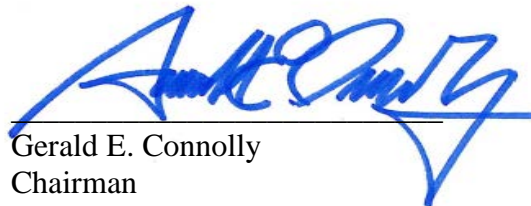
Page 3

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Given the importance of this oversight, we trust it will be made a priority of the office. The health and safety of our more than two million federal workers is at stake. We cannot afford to get this wrong. We look forward to your prompt reply.

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Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

Congress of the United States
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COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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MAJORITY (202) 225-5051

MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Hannibal Ware
Inspector General
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Inspector General Ware:

The Subcommittee on Government Operations requests that the Office of Inspector General (IG) examine the plans and procedures of the U.S. Small Business Administration for returning employees to federal offices in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Federal IGs have played a critical role in overseeing the operations of the federal government throughout the pandemic. Your continued oversight is critical to protect the health and safety of our government's most valuable resource: its federal workforce.

In recent weeks, some agencies have begun reopening federal offices and requiring employees to return to their duty stations.¹ The Subcommittee asks that you review whether your agency and its managers are employing best practices and existing guidance when deciding whether or when to require federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings. The health and safety of federal employees is of paramount concern. We need to ensure that Administration officials are cautious and prudent when requiring federal employees and contractors to return to federal office buildings.

On April 29, 2020, and May 15, 2020, we wrote to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) raising concerns about the Administration's federal reopening guidance. In those letters, we requested a briefing from OMB and OPM staff.² The response we received on June 2, 2020, ignored our briefing request

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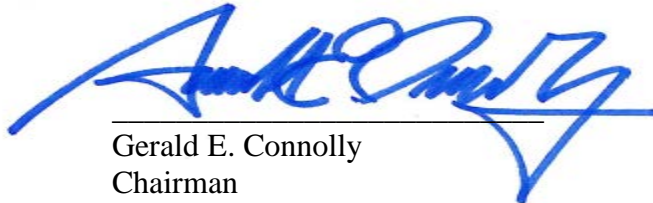
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Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

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