

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 3, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

All across America, our citizens are facing an unprecedented crisis in the fight against COVID-19. In the last several weeks, Congress has attempted to match the urgency of situation by allocating more than \$2 trillion in additional resources to assist the many actions already undertaken by governments at every level. We urge your administration to take every needed step to assure those resources are delivered to those who need them by providing strong oversight and accountability.

This will require an extraordinary effort to immediately update its protocols to ensure that appropriated funds are targeted to the most affected businesses and individuals. It will also require every agency review and update your procedures as appropriate to prevent and identify any incidents of waste, fraud and abuse. It will also require cooperation with oversight authorities, including both Congress and inspectors general. We were encouraged to see the appointment of Glenn Fine to serve as chair of the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee, along with other inspectors general who will lead the oversight effort.

Specifically, the CARES Act established a *Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery* within the Treasury to “conduct, supervise, and coordinate audits and investigations of the making, purchase, management, and sale of loans, loan guarantees, and other investments made by the Treasury Secretary.” The Special Inspector General is also tasked with keeping Congress informed through quarterly reports that detail all of the loans, loan guarantees, or other investments. We expect that the Special Inspector General will fulfill its statutory responsibilities, and look forward to working with your administration to ensure robust oversight of taxpayer dollars.

One of the most important steps the administration can take in the short term to ensure oversight is by nominating individuals to fill key vacancies. According to the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE), there are several agencies at the cabinet level that lack permanent inspectors general. This list includes agencies with major responsibilities to implement the COVID-19 relief response, such as the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of the Treasury, and the Department of Education.

Inspectors general play a vital watchdog role, and their permanence would give Congress, and the wider public, more trust that these dollars are being spent in the most effective way possible to best blunt the economic impact from COVID-19.

This is a critical time in our nation’s history and each agency plays a vital role in our recovery. With trillions of taxpayer dollars being spent, it is critically important for the Administration to ensure full transparency and willingness for independent oversight. As you work to implement COVID-19 legislation, we ask that you provide Congress a detailed plan on how the government plans to execute these funds and what accountability measures are being put in place to ensure our taxpayer dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. We look forward to your swift response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon Tester". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jon Tester
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mitt Romney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mitt Romney
United States Senator