

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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November 25, 2019

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney:

On September 24, 2019, Speaker Pelosi unilaterally announced that the House of Representatives would initiate an inquiry into impeaching President Donald J. Trump.<sup>1</sup> On October 31, Democrats passed—over bipartisan opposition—a resolution establishing a façade of fairness for the Democrats’ “impeachment inquiry,” but drastically departs from bipartisan precedent on presidential impeachment.<sup>2</sup> The Democrats’ impeachment resolution—and their failure to follow their own rules—has led to a one-sided, partisan, and fundamentally unfair inquiry that has divided the country. The Committee on Oversight and Reform has taken a central role in this inquiry, to the detriment of the Committee’s other important, bipartisan work.

Committee Republicans have consistently urged Committee Democrats to set aside their partisan agenda and tackle the pressing issues that affect all Americans. For example:

**Combatting Waste, Fraud, and Abuse** – On May 22, 2019, all Subcommittee Ranking Members and Ranking Member Jordan sent a letter to Chairman Cummings and all Subcommittee Chairmen requesting a hearing on the Government Accountability Office’s (GAO) 9th annual report on duplication, overlap and fragmentation in federal programs.<sup>3</sup> GAO’s 2019 duplication report identified hundreds of actions the government could take to save billions of dollars for American taxpayers.<sup>4</sup> Our letter requested that we work together to find bipartisan solutions to implement GAO’s duplication report recommendations. To date, Committee Democrats have not responded to our call for bipartisanship work on this central mission of the Committee. The Democrats’

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<sup>1</sup> Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Pelosi Remarks Announcing Impeachment Inquiry (Sept. 24, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> H. RES. 660, 116th Cong.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm on Oversight & Reform, et.al., to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, Oversight & Reform, et.al. (May 22, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Gov’t Accountability Off., 2019 Annual Report: Additional Opportunities to Reduce Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication and Achieve Billions in Financial Benefits (GAO-19-285SP) (May 2019).

“impeachment inquiry” prevents the Committee from carrying out one of its most fundamental duties.

**Oversight of D.C. Metro Board Scandals** – On September 19, 2019, Republican members of the Committee sent a letter to Chairman Cummings requesting a minority hearing relating to District of Columbia (D.C.) Councilmember Jack Evans scandal.<sup>5</sup> The request for a minority hearing came after Chairman Cummings refused to call Councilmember Evans as a witness to the hearing entitled “H.R. 51: Making D.C. the 51<sup>st</sup> State.”<sup>6</sup> House Rule XI, Clause 2(j)(1), requires the Democrat Majority to grant us a hearing; however, to date, Committee Democrats have offered us no potential dates to consider in convening this hearing. As such, the Committee cannot fully assess the misconduct of D.C. Councilmember Evans and how it affects potential D.C. statehood. Since the beginning of the Democrats’ “impeachment inquiry,” Committee Democrats have abandoned this important oversight.

**Border Security and Human Trafficking** – In August 2019, the Committee undertook multiple trips across the country to visit border detention facilities. Committee Republicans strongly believe that border security should be a bipartisan priority.<sup>7</sup> Democrats’ focus on impugning the work of Border Patrol agents only detracts from real problems at our southern border, including human trafficking. According to John Hostettler of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, “The violence in countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras has created a demand for human traffickers whose empty promises and exorbitant fees drive and direct the flow of migrants to the border. . . . This rampant, unrestricted human trafficking is the real crisis at the border . . . .”<sup>8</sup> Committee Republicans stand ready to work with Democrats to address the root causes of our border insecurity—for example, by clarifying the *Flores* settlement and eliminating incentives in our immigration laws that drive the scourge of human trafficking at the southern border. The Democrats’ “impeachment inquiry” prevents bipartisan work to address our border crisis.

**Combating Rising Drug Costs** – On January 14, 2019, Chairman Cummings initiated a broad investigation into pharmaceutical company drug pricing

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<sup>5</sup> Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, et.al., to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Sept. 19, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, and Mark Meadows, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Gov’t Operations, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Sept. 16, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Aug. 12, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

<sup>8</sup> John N. Hostettler, *Human trafficking is the real border crisis*, WASH. TIMES (Sept. 18, 2019), <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/human-trafficking-is-the-real-border-crisis>. Also see, Manny Fernandez, *You Have to Pay With Your Body’: The Hidden Nightmare of Sexual Violence on the Border*, NEW YORK TIMES (Mar. 3, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/03/us/border-rapes-migrant-women.html>.

decisions.<sup>9</sup> Combatting rising drug prices should be a bipartisan issue. On May 6, 2019, Republicans sent a letter to Chairman Cummings asking the Committee to work collaboratively to investigate rising drug prices.<sup>10</sup> To date, Committee Democrats have declined to work cooperatively to address rising prescription drug prices. The Democrats' "impeachment inquiry" prevents bipartisan work to address rising prescription drug prices.

**Opioid Crisis** – According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2017, there were 70,237 drug overdose deaths in the United States; nearly 70 percent of all drug overdose deaths involved opioids.<sup>11</sup> Earlier this year, the Committee held several hearings focused on the impacts of the opioid crisis in America.<sup>12</sup> However, since the beginning of the Democrats' "impeachment inquiry," Committee Democrats have ignored this serious public health crisis.

**Legislation** – Since January 2019, Committee Democrats have pursued an aggressive and partisan agenda of subpoenas and contempt citations designed to advance their narrow political interests. As an unfortunate side effect, Democrats have passed very few bills through the Committee. In fact, the Committee has not held a business meeting of any kind, legislative or otherwise, since July 2019, and we are aware of no anticipated business meeting before the end of the year. Even when Democrats have convened business meetings, the agenda had been consumed by subpoenas and contempt citations—and not legislative proposals to improve the efficiency, accountability, or effectiveness of the federal government. To date, the Committee has not considered many major legislative items of bipartisan interest, including:

- Facial recognition technology;
- Reforms to burdensome, inefficient, and duplicative federal red-tape;
- Reforms to the bloated and unaccountable federal workforce;
- Transparency and accountability in federal spending;

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<sup>9</sup> See, Letters from Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, to the following pharmaceutical companies Amgen, Celgene, Pfizer, Sanofi, AbbVie, Johnson & Johnson, Novo Nordisk, Teva Pharmaceuticals, Eli Lilly, AstraZeneca, and Mallinckrodt (Jan. 14, 2019) (all on file with the Committee).

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (May 6, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

<sup>11</sup> CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS, <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html> (last visited November 19, 2019).

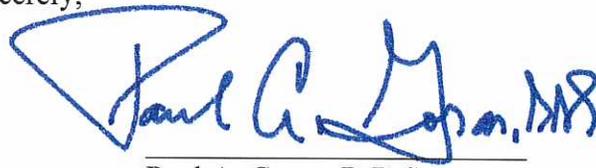
<sup>12</sup> See, *The Trump Administration's Response to the Drug Crisis: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform*, 116th Cong. (Mar. 7, 2019), and *The Trump Administration's Response to the Drug Crisis, Part II: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform*, 116th Cong. (May 9, 2019), and *Medical Experts: Inadequate Federal Approach to Opioid Treatment and the Need to Expand Care: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform*, 116th Cong. (Jun. 19, 2019).

- Cybersecurity and reforms to federal information-technology systems; and
- Reforms to modernize the U.S. Postal Service and prevent a taxpayer-funded bailout.

As Chairman Cummings once counseled, “our work in this Committee must not be driven by the next election.”<sup>13</sup> The important issues listed above have been brushed aside, and seemingly forgotten, by Committee Democrats in favor of partisan investigations of the President—all culminating in the ongoing “impeachment inquiry.” As the newly elected Chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, we urge you to remember Chairman Cummings’ wise words and orient the Committee’s work toward consensus-based, bipartisan solutions. The Democrats’ “impeachment inquiry” has a real opportunity cost for the American people, who expect us to work together to solve real problems and not to pursue one-sided and fundamentally unfair political investigations.

Sincerely,

  
Jim Jordan  
Ranking Member

  
Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.

  
Virginia Foxx

  
Thomas Massie

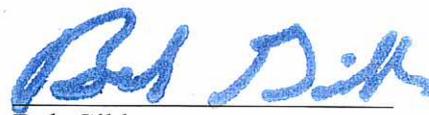
  
Mark Meadows

  
Jody Hice

  
Glenn Grothman

  
James Comer

  
Michael Cloud

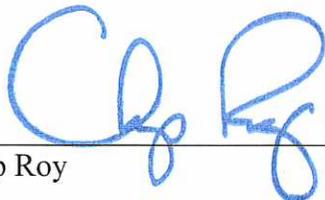
  
Bob Gibbs

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<sup>13</sup> 115<sup>th</sup> Congress Organization Meeting Before the H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov’t Reform, 115th Cong., 7, 10 (2017) (statement of Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm on Oversight & Gov’t Reform).



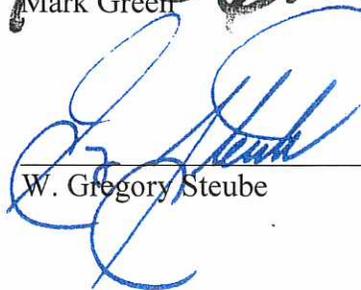
Ralph Norman



Chip Roy



Mark Green



W. Gregory Steube



Clay Higgins



Carol D. Miller



Kelly Armstrong



Fred Keller