

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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December 6, 2021

The Honorable Lisa Monaco
Deputy Attorney General
Task Force to Combat COVID-19 Fraud Lead
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Deputy Attorney General Monaco:

We are conducting oversight of the Department of Justice's (Department) efforts to combat and pursue COVID-19 relief fraud, particularly transnational and state sponsored organizations. Reportedly, 40 percent or more of the \$700 billion spent on unemployment benefits went to fraud. This includes \$175 billion to transnational actors with \$140 billion of that—20 percent of the overall amount spent by the U.S. government—going to state-sponsored entities.¹ This gross mismanagement of taxpayer dollars must be investigated and prosecuted, and safeguards must be in place to protect Americans' hard-earned money from going into the pockets of foreign adversaries. It is imperative the Committee hear from the Department regarding its efforts to combat international and state-sponsored fraud.

In one recent example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) found all the signs of a Nigerian state-sponsored "massive" cyber fraud scam that included stolen bank, credit card, and tax information of Americans.² This example can be repeated around the world, especially with known state-sponsors of cyber fraud and warfare like China and Russia. The FBI Deputy Assistant Director Jay Greenberg said these efforts are "an economic attack on the United States."³

At a recent staff briefing, the Department said it has charged nearly \$1 billion in intended loss, and hundreds of millions in actual loss, of COVID-19 relief to fraud.⁴ Based on estimates, that means there are still hundreds of billions in unidentified loss.⁵ The Department refused to share how many active cases involve transnational organizations or state-sponsored

¹ Stephen Dinan, *Feds pay billions to fraudsters tied to China and Russia in COVID-19 schemes*, WASH. TIMES (Nov. 29, 2021).

² Ken Dilanian, Kit Ramgopal, & Chloe Atkins, *'Easy money': How international scam artists pulled off an epic theft of Covid benefits*, NBC NEWS (Aug. 15, 2021).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Staff Briefing, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, Select Subcomm. on the Coronavirus Crisis, with U.S. Dep't of Justice (Nov. 19, 2021).

⁵ Dilanian, *supra* note 2.

organizations, and given this recent reporting, the Department's refusal is even more concerning.⁶

To better understand the Department's efforts to combat transnational and state-sponsored COVID-19 related fraud schemes, please provide a staff-level briefing as soon as possible but no later than December 13, 2021. At the briefing, please be prepared to address the following topics:

1. The total number of current Department cases involving transnational criminal organizations aggregated by country of origin regarding COVID-19 relief funds.
2. The total number of current Department cases involving state-sponsored criminal organizations aggregated by country of origin regarding COVID-19 relief funds.
3. The total amount of intended loss involved in cases identified in requests (1) and (2) aggregated by country of origin regarding COVID-19 relief funds.
4. The total amount of actual loss involved in cases identified in requests (1) and (2) aggregated by country of origin regarding COVID-19 relief funds.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,



Scott Franklin
Member of Congress



James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Glenn S. Grothman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Security



Michael Cloud
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Economic and
Consumer Policy

⁶ Staff Briefing, *supra* note 4.

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Ralph Norman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment



Nancy Mace
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and
Civil Liberties



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



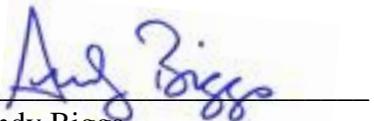
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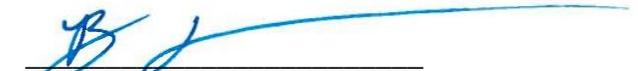
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Byron Donalds
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Stephen F. Lynch, Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security

The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi, Chairman
Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

The Honorable Ro Khanna, Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Chairman
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties