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March 20, 2020

Hon. William P. Barr
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Barr:

I am writing as a follow-up to the [March 16, 2020](#) letter to you from National Whistleblower Center Board Chairman Stephen M. Kohn regarding oversight of federal spending on coronavirus. Since that letter was sent, Congress has passed and President Trump has signed legislation allocating \$100 billion to respond to the coronavirus crisis. Additional legislation is expected in the coming days, with hundreds of billions of dollars likely to be delivered in short order to private businesses and individuals to address the coronavirus crisis.

Unprecedented in the speed in which it is being delivered, this gargantuan federal spending creates enormous opportunities for waste, fraud, and abuse. Our experience with national emergencies teaches us that some will attempt to profit from others' misfortune and divert large sums away from the coronavirus response. At a time of national crisis, with millions of lives and livelihoods at stake, the Trump Administration has a solemn duty to ensure coronavirus funding is sent to its intended recipients and spent in accordance with the law.

The National Whistleblower Center, the nation's leading nonprofit organization focused on protecting and rewarding whistleblowers, is making its contribution to the coronavirus response effort by focusing on accountability in the use of taxpayer dollars. We will educate those with evidence of waste, fraud, and abuse in connection with coronavirus spending on how to blow the whistle and hold wrongdoers accountable. As you know, whistleblowers have a [long and successful track record](#) under the False Claims Act in achieving justice and accountability for government procurement fraud. But your department must take the lead on transparency and accountability. Specifically, the Department of Justice must:

1. Establish and lead a multi-agency Task Force to Combat Coronavirus-Related Fraud, focused on transparency and accountability for coronavirus spending;
2. Abolish the Federal Bureau of Investigation's arbitrary [new limits on Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) requests](#) and develop an Administration-wide policy focused on expediting FOIA responses regarding inquiries into coronavirus spending;
3. Prioritize False Claims Act enforcement in cases involving coronavirus-related procurement fraud, with special attention to *qui tam* actions filed by whistleblowers; and
4. Enlist the Association of Inspectors General and whistleblower protection offices in the federal government to launch an Administration-wide education and outreach effort to

encourage and support confidential whistleblower reporting of waste, fraud, and abuse involving coronavirus-related spending.

The National Whistleblower Center stands ready to assist your department and the Administration as a whole with this critical endeavor. The coronavirus represents an enormous challenge to the health, safety, and wellbeing of U.S. citizens and people around the globe. We believe that this challenge can be met, and harm can be minimized, only if we pull together and ensure that coronavirus response funds are spent for their intended purposes.

Thank you for your attention this urgent matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Kostyack", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Kostyack
Executive Director

cc: Michael Horowitz, USDOJ Inspector General
Stephen M. Kohn, NWC Board Chairman