

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2016

The Honorable Julian Castro
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On April 5, 2016, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its final legal opinion regarding the Committees' requests to interview Department employee Maurice McGough, Regional Director of the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity's Chicago Regional Office.¹ Department of Housing and Urban Development officials instructed Mr. McGough not to communicate directly with congressional investigators despite his desire and willingness to do so. Specifically, GAO reviewed the actions of HUD General Deputy Assistant Secretary Elliot Minberg and Associate General Counsel Kevin Simpson. GAO found:

The General Deputy Assistant Secretary and the Associate General Counsel prevented the Regional Director from having direct communications with the committees from April 8 to April 23, 2013, in violation of section 713. . . . HUD's appropriation was not available to pay the salaries of these employees from the point in time that the delay became a refusal until the time HUD agreed to schedule the interview with the Regional Director. HUD should consider these salary payments improper. Therefore, we recommend that HUD seek to recover these payments, as required by 31 U.S.C. § 3711.²

In light of GAO's findings with respect to Mr. Minberg and Mr. Simpson, please provide the Committees with the following as soon as possible, but no later than noon on July 6, 2016:

1. All documents referring or relating to the Department's procedures for recovering improper payments;
2. All documents sufficient to describe the Department's efforts to recover improper payments to Mr. Minberg and Mr. Simpson; and
3. All documents referring or relating to the GAO opinion or appropriations restriction at issue in the opinion.

In addition, no later than July 11, 2016, please provide the Committees with a briefing regarding these issues.

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Department of Housing and Urban Development—Application of Section 713 of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2012 (Reconsideration)*, B-325124.2 (Apr. 5, 2016).

² *Id.* at 15.

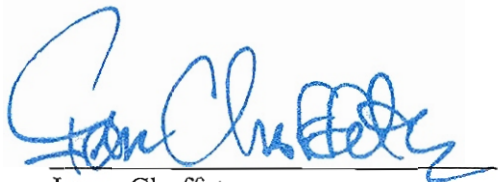
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Should you have any questions, please contact Tristan Leavitt of Chairman Chaffetz's Committee staff at (202) 225-5074, DeLisa Lay of Chairman Grassley's Committee staff at (202) 224-5225, or Dan Huff of Chairman Goodlatte's Committee staff at (202) 226-3485. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary



Bob Goodlatte
Chairman
House Committee on the Judiciary

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate, Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office