

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 2, 2019

The Hon. Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Horowitz,

On Saturday, August 10, 2019, the day that serial child rapist and wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein was found dead in his cell, Attorney General Barr announced that you were opening an investigation into the circumstances of his death.

Epstein's death in federal custody represents a colossal failure by the Department of Justice. As the kingpin of a child sex trafficking ring, Epstein possessed unique insight into the crimes of his friends and associates. That knowledge died with him, making it significantly harder to prosecute his co-conspirators. These wealthy and powerful men raped innocent children, and it is an outrage that the Department's inability to keep Epstein alive—after a previous apparent suicide attempt—makes it less likely that these monsters can be brought to justice. The pain that this inflicts on these survivors is difficult to fathom. Moreover, these events have ignited a crisis of public trust in the Department and exacerbated the erosion of trust that the American people have in our institutions of republican self-government more broadly. The Department's abject failure in this high-profile situation raises serious concerns about its ability to protect and secure inmates in the many cases that do not make the news.

Enough delay. The public needs answers.

Nevertheless, during the Senate Judiciary Committee's hearing on November 19, 2019, the Director of the Bureau of Prisons repeatedly refused to answer questions about this matter, citing your ongoing investigation into the circumstances of his death. The IG's office has an important oversight duty, and it cannot be used by others in the bureaucracy as a shield against calls for transparency. While we recognize that thorough investigations cannot be completed overnight, more than three months have passed since Epstein's death and the initiation of your investigation.

We therefore write to you today to ask that you devote whatever resources that are within your purview to completing this investigation as expeditiously as possible. Moreover, we ask that you brief us this week on the status of the investigation and the expected timeline of its completion and public release.

Sincerely,



Ben Sasse
U.S. Senator



Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senator



Marsha Blackburn
U.S. Senator



Ted Cruz
U.S. Senator