

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 28, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Democratic Leader  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Shelby, and Vice Chairman Leahy:

We write to express our strong opposition to the use of COVID-19 relief legislation to fund the construction of a new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) headquarters in Washington, D.C. Such a project has no relevance whatsoever to the public health and economic recovery assistance Americans so urgently need, and we are appalled that the legislation just released by the Senate majority provides \$1.75 billion for exactly this purpose.

The United States is in the midst of a public health crisis and an economic downturn. Addressing these related challenges requires us to work together to consider the ways Americans have been suffering during this pandemic and the many different sectors of our economy that have been impacted. Faced with this formidable task, the Administration's request for nearly two billion dollars for a pet real estate project reveals a warped sense of priorities and further demonstrates its inability to formulate a plan to lead us forward.

For more than a decade, there was bicameral, bipartisan agreement in Congress that the FBI needs a new headquarters to properly support the agency and provide the security, technology, and space that it needs to carry out its mission. Despite this significant work between the FBI, General Services Administration (GSA), and Congress, the current Administration cancelled the project without explanation three years ago. To make progress towards this common goal of providing our FBI agents with the facility they deserve, perhaps the Administration can answer the backlog of questions from Congress about why, at great cost to American taxpayers, it abandoned efforts to develop a new campus headquarters for the FBI, and it can cooperate with the ongoing Department of Justice Inspector General's investigation into this conduct. These actions would be more productive than asking taxpayers to fund this proposal in an unrelated COVID-19 relief bill.

For the past three years, while the Administration has failed to account for its abandonment of the planning process for a new FBI headquarters, Congress has explicitly refused to support any

hurried, ill-considered FBI headquarters project in its place. Our next COVID-19 relief legislation is not the occasion for Congress to abruptly change its policy in pursuit of a headquarters renovation that will not meet the consolidation and security needs of the agency.

We look forward to working with you on an effective relief package that provides essential support to American families, workers, and the economy. To help in this process, we urge you to promptly reject the Administration's inappropriate request to fund a new FBI headquarters.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin

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Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen

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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner

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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine

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Tim Kaine  
United States Senator