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5TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4605

May 10, 2021

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Inspector General
Christi A. Grimm
330 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Ms. Grimm,

We request that you investigate immediately allegations of collusion and political influence in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s correspondence between the CDC and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in regard to the development of the February 12, 2021 CDC guidance on reopening schools.

Many had anticipated in February that the CDC would recommend in-school instruction nationwide, as studies, including one published by CDC researchers, indicate that school attendance contributes little to community transmission and students are largely safe with in-person instruction.¹ Instead, the resulting guidance was contradictory and ambiguous, stating that it was safe for schools to be open if mitigation techniques were employed, but that schools in areas with high transmission could choose not to employ mitigation techniques in the classroom and instead remain closed. Emails between AFT and CDC officials just days before the release of the February guidance show that two AFT requests restricting reopening were adopted almost verbatim in the final guidance.²

Parents across the country have long been suspicious about the inordinate union influence in the school reopening debate. For this reason, Republicans have called for greater accountability from teacher unions regarding school reopening. Americans rightly expect the CDC to make public health decisions based on science and data, not political pressure or favors to special interests. In this instance, it seems that students and families were caught in the middle of a political debate that should have never been politicized.

¹ Margaret A. Honein, PhD, Lisa C. Barrios, Dr.PH, John T. Brooks, MD, *Data and Policy to Guide Opening Schools Safely to Limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2 Infection*, Journal of American Medical Association, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2775875>

² Jon Levine, *Powerful teachers union influenced CDC on school reopening, emails show*, New York Post, <https://nypost.com/2021/05/01/teachers-union-collaborated-with-cdc-on-school-reopening-emails/>

We recognize that this year has been difficult for many Americans, especially students, parents, and teachers. While it seems clear that the AFT remains willing to put union interests before students, the public must know if the CDC has been acting in good faith to protect the physical and developmental health of America's students.

Sincerely,



Bob Good
Member of Congress



Dr. Virginia A. Foxx
Member of Congress



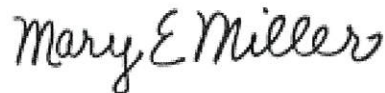
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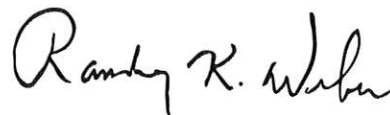
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