

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

October 6, 2020

The Honorable Mark Meadows
Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Mr. Meadows:

We write seeking information on the steps the White House is taking to address the COVID-19 super-spreader event that occurred at the White House complex last week and the outbreak that has hospitalized the President of the United States and infected numerous White House staff, multiple journalists, three United States Senators, and many others.

As this outbreak continues to grow, it is critical that the public and those who may have been exposed have access to accurate and transparent information. Secret Service officials, active-duty military personnel, White House and congressional staff, journalists, and others who visit or work in the White House complex – including those potentially exposed at the reception for Judge Barrett or in any other setting – need the facts about this outbreak to keep themselves and their families safe.

Despite the risk to those who may have been exposed, the White House has conducted itself in a secretive manner and shown a complete lack of regard for public health and safety. Critical information about the health of the President and his associates appears to have been deliberately withheld in order to minimize public scrutiny and awareness, and it is still unclear when the President or his advisors first knew there was an outbreak.

In addition, there have been disturbing reports that minimal, if any, contact tracing has been conducted and few, if any, public health measures have been put in place to contain the spread of the disease. General guidance to not come to work if symptomatic was reportedly provide to those working in the complex, but this guidance apparently did not address the risk of asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic transmission. Even with reports that White House housekeeping staff and Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany have tested positive, the lack of clear guidance or decisive action has continued.

The opaque and secretive handling of information related to these events constitutes an obvious threat to public health and is unacceptable in a free nation whose elected leaders must be transparent with and accountable to the American people. As the President thankfully recovers and returns to the White House after his hospitalization, we call on you to immediately provide a thorough and complete description of what, if any, contact tracing regimen has been instituted to prevent further spread of the virus, and detailed information about the progress of that effort, if it exists. We also call on you to provide complete transparency regarding the timeline of the outbreak and guidance to any and all individuals working within the White House complex,

including additional information on testing, quarantine and isolation, and the use of masks on White House grounds.

The United States remains deeply mired in a crushing public health crisis that has already claimed more than 209,000 precious lives. It is a crisis that has now reached deep into the White House and the Senate. Our most important priority must be the health of the American people, not optics or political considerations. Thank you for your attention to a matter critical to the public health of our nation.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator

cc: Commander Keith Bass, USN
Director, White House Medical Unit