

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 13th, 2020

The Honorable Keith Krach
Under Secretary of State for Economic
Growth, Energy, and the Environment
Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Under Secretary Krach:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of families in the United States are struggling to make ends meet due to the economic effects of this public health crisis. Congress has acted to provide a substantial and widespread economic stimulus, but we believe much more needs to be done to ensure families around our country are able to get by during this emergency.

While the Federal Government must be responsive to their needs, we write to you with deep concerns regarding the “Eagle Plan” which reports indicate¹ was drafted within your offices by a member of your team, Mr. Paul Touw, that calls for cuts to earned Social Security benefits. This plan is deeply concerning in both its policy and its development.

In this moment of crisis, when millions of Americans are struggling to make ends meet and fear for their retirement, we should be enhancing Social Security, not developing policies to reduce benefits. The idea that you would ask individual Americans to sell out their hard-earned retirement security as the price of desperately-needed help during a crisis is unacceptable. Social Security benefits are the bedrock of retirement security – the one source of retirement income that is guaranteed to be secure and reliable. We will never force people to choose between putting food on the table now, and ensuring that they will receive the full, earned Social Security benefits they’ll need when they retire or if they become severely disabled or die prematurely. Now is the time to strengthen, not cut, this essential program.

Moreover, if these reports are accurate, this input into domestic policy is entirely outside the mandate of the State Department, and is a wholly inappropriate use of its resources. In light of these concerns, we ask that the Department produce to the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations and the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, no later than May 21st, 2020, the following items:

1. The complete and unredacted “Eagle Plan” document, in addition to the unredacted clearance page for the document.

¹ Washington Post, **Top White House advisers, unlike their boss, increasingly worry stimulus spending is costing too much**, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/05/10/top-white-house-advisers-unlike-their-boss-increasingly-worry-stimulus-spending-is-costing-too-much/>


2. A list of all individuals, in and out of the Department of State, who contributed to the development of the document or the Social Security policies within it.
3. Any and all documents referring, relating to, or referencing the "Eagle Plan" or Social Security policy produced by the State Department.

Our staffs are prepared to work cooperatively with you to ensure these documents are produced. Please reach out to our staff to provide the requested documents or if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



JOAQUIN CASTRO
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations
House Committee on Foreign Affairs



JOHN B. LARSON
Chairman
Subcommittee on Social Security
House Committee on Ways & Means