

December 5, 2019

**By facsimile: (202) 514-1009**

Kerri Kupec  
Director, Office of Public Affairs  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Re: Request for Expedition of Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear Ms. Kupec;

Pursuant to Department of Justice (“DOJ”) regulations, 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(e)(2), Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (“CREW”) requests that you authorize the expedition of a Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) request CREW made today to the Office of Information Policy. I have enclosed a copy of this request.

The FOIA request seeks copies of all records of budgets, expenses, salaries, and costs of the investigation being conducted by United States Attorney John H. Durham of the U.S. Attorneys’ Office for the District of Connecticut as they relate to his review into the origins of the government’s investigation into interference in the 2016 election.

CREW seeks expedition because the subject matter of the request is of widespread and exceptional media interest and the requested information involves possible questions about the government’s integrity, which clearly affect public confidence. The investigations related to Russian interference in the 2016 election and coordination with the Trump campaign have continued to dominate the national narrative. There are serious concerns regarding Attorney General Barr’s involvement in Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller’s investigation into Russia’s interference in the 2016 election, as well as his impartiality when he issued a four-page letter to Congress purporting to summarize Special Counsel Mueller’s report prior to its public release in an apparent attempt to skew public opinion in favor of President Trump.<sup>1</sup> With the reported developments including Attorney General Barr assigning the United States attorney in Connecticut, John H. Durham to investigate the origin of the Mueller investigation,<sup>2</sup> it is crucial that the American public are informed fully about the Attorney General’s role and the extent to which he has attempted to direct the investigation.

The public has a strong interest in obtaining records of budgets, expenses, salaries, and costs of the investigation being conducted by John H. Durham into the origins of the

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Noah Bookbinder to Attorney General William P. Barr, Apr. 11, 2019, *available at* <https://bit.ly/2IN1ZXe>; Letter from Noah Bookbinder to Assistant Attorney General Lee J. Lofthus, May 20, 2019, *available at* <https://bit.ly/2Mis3LH>.

<sup>2</sup> Adam Goldman, Charlie Savage, Michael S. Schmidt, *Barr Assigns U.S. Attorney in Connecticut to Review Origins of Russia Inquiry*, *The New York Times*, March. 13, 2019, *available at* <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/13/us/politics/russia-investigation-justice-department-review.html>

Kerri Kupec  
December 5, 2019  
Page 2

government's investigation into interference in the 2016 election. This investigation is one of several that Attorney General Barr has pursued on the taxpayers' dime and public reporting suggests he has had a heavy hand in the direction the investigation is going. It is therefore imperative that the public has access to this information in an expedited manner.<sup>3</sup> CREW's request will ensure the public's right to this information is fully realized by the American public.

CREW's primary purpose is to inform and educate the public about the activities of government officials and those who influence public officials. Toward that end, CREW uses statutes like the FOIA to gather information the public needs to hold public officials accountable. The requests for which CREW seeks expedition will further those goals.

I certify the following is true and correct.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hajar I. Hammado', is written over the typed name. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hajar I. Hammado  
Policy Assistant

Encl.

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<sup>3</sup> Katie Benner, Adam Goldman, Justice Dept. Is Said to Open Criminal Inquiry Into Its Own Russia Investigation, *The New York Times*, Oct. 24, 2019, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/24/us/politics/john-durham-criminal-investigation.html>