
Weekly COVID-19 Oversight & Enforcement Report

July 16, 2020

A. Congress

1. Retired Gen. Joseph Dunford, former chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, has [withdrawn from consideration](#) to lead the **Congressional Oversight Commission**.
2. The **House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis** launched an investigation into contracts entered into by the Trump Administration to procure PPE and testing supplies. The lawmakers say reports indicate federal agencies awarded contracts to businesses that had political connections to the Administration and some companies failed to provide the supplies promised. More generally, Subcommittee Chairman Clyburn [encouraged](#) Americans to report any information that federal relief funding has been subject to waste, fraud, or abuse.
3. House Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-MA) [called](#) on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to increase their oversight of nursing homes and long-term care facilities through improved surveys and data collection.
4. More than 930 employees of private contractors running U.S. immigration detention centers [have tested positive](#) for COVID-19, according to congressional testimony before a House Homeland Security subcommittee. Lawmakers have raised concerns about the spread of the virus inside nearly 70 centers across the country. More than 3,000 immigrants in ICE custody have tested positive for COVID-19, although some have recovered or been released.
5. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) [sent a letter](#) to American Correctional Association (ACA) Director James A. Gondles Jr. regarding the ACA's procedures for inspecting and accrediting correctional facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The letter is part of Warren's ongoing investigation into the ACA following widespread reports of mismanagement and poor conditions for prisoners and detainees in facilities nationwide.
6. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said a draft of the next proposed coronavirus-related stimulus package will be released next week, and that it must include "liability protections for everyone" or it won't pass the Senate. "No one should have to face an epidemic of lawsuits" on the heels of a crisis, he said.

B. Executive Agencies

1. **DOJ** continued to bring charges against individuals for PPP-related fraud, including against a [Texas man](#), the [owner of a residential contracting firm](#) in DC, and a [Florida man](#).

2. In the absence of enforceable rules by the **Occupational Safety and Health Administration** regarding COVID-19 precautions, eight states have [created](#) rules to protect farm workers, which require employers to provide PPE, physical distancing, workplace disinfection, and worker testing.

C. State Attorneys General

1. Shortly after Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology filed a [lawsuit](#) against the Department of Homeland Security challenging its proposal to bar international students from studying in the United States if all of their classes are taught online, a number of state AGs filed similar suits on behalf of their states. Massachusetts AG Healey, leading a coalition of 18 AGs, filed [suit](#), as did the AGs of [California](#), [New York](#) and [Washington](#). The Department of Homeland Security abandoned the proposal.
2. West Virginia AG Patrick Morrisey filed a price-gouging [lawsuit](#) against Green Valley Poultry Farms, owned by Dutt & Wagner of Virginia Inc., alleging that the egg supplier increased the wholesale price of eggs it sold to grocery stores in the state by nearly 300 percent. General Morrisey's lawsuit seeks restitution, penalties, and an injunction prohibiting the wholesaler from increasing prices beyond that permitted by the state's price-gouging statute.
3. The House Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce held a hearing entitled "Consumers Beware: Increased Risks during the COVID-19 Pandemic," at which Kevin Anderson, Senior Deputy Attorney General and Consumer Protection Division Director of the North Carolina Attorney General's Office, testified. Mr. Anderson's testimony [described](#) the myriad ways in which state AGs have responded to consumer fraud inspired by the pandemic, including by both increasing enforcement and educating residents.

D. Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery (SIGPR)

1. A [report](#) yesterday in The Hill highlights delays in the implementation of oversight of the CARES Act, including the slow ramp up of SIGPR due to delays in hiring. Another [report](#) identifies the same hiring delays and notes that SIGPR's oversight work has not fully begun.

E. Pandemic Recovery Accountability Committee (PRAC)

1. According to the same [report](#) in The Hill, PRAC has still not received spending data, although, as reported last week, Treasury has [indicated](#) that it will provide that data.
2. The PRAC website and Twitter account continue to highlight the efforts of the Offices of Inspector General at various agencies and the reports these offices are preparing, including, most recently, an [interim report](#) prepared by the DOJ on the Office of Justice Programs' Administration of CARES Act Funding and a [report](#) by the Department of Labor presenting the results of an audit of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs' initial response to the pandemic.

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