

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2020

The Honorable Russell T. Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Vought,

We write to you regarding the guidance issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the subject of “Implementation of Section 2 of Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds That Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities.” We demand that you cease and desist all efforts to enforce this guidance or act on the President’s related memorandum, and request immediately all documents related to the promulgation of OMB Memorandum M-20-36.

By implementing this Presidential memorandum, which seeks to punish jurisdictions by executive fiat and according to the political whims of the President, you have allowed OMB to become an agent of hysteria, bigotry, and distortion. It is illegal, unconstitutional, and morally wrong to target Americans in this outrageous and enormously abusive manner. The extremism of your actions cannot be understated, and they will weigh heavily on your legacy in the Trump Administration.

This Presidential memorandum is a transparent attempt to unlawfully and unilaterally punish jurisdictions that have political leadership the President does not like. Just the threat to wield an entirely manufactured executive power in this manner is chilling. This is often done by authoritarian regimes to erode limits on executive power, undermine the rule of law, and instill fear of retribution among political opposition, all with the supposed imprimatur of the state.

You must comprehend the immense pain you are potentially inflicting on your fellow American citizens. For every dollar of federal assistance that is no longer spent protecting and caring for children and families in jurisdictions targeted pursuant to this memorandum, this Administration will be guilty of inflicting wanton human suffering for political ends during a pandemic and economic retraction when such assistance is needed most. The most charitable interpretation of your actions is weakness in the service of Presidential appeasement. A less charitable one would be an enthusiasm for punishing the President’s political enemies on his behalf.

We demand that you immediately cease all efforts to enforce this illegitimate order.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

/s/
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/
David Trone
Member of Congress