

January 14, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member, Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Graham and Feinstein,

As the Senate Judiciary Committee begins its formal consideration of Mr. William Pelham Barr to serve as Attorney General, Restore Public Trust urges the members of your committee to consider the inherent conflicts of interest that will impede Mr. Barr's ability to carry out the duties of Attorney General. A fair and unbiased Attorney General is essential to the fundamental integrity of the Justice Department, and a new report from Restore Public Trust raises serious questions about Mr. Barr's ability to carry out the job in this manner.

It is paramount that the Attorney General support the independence of the Special Counsel, Robert Mueller, and protect the Special Counsel's ability to perform its investigation into potentially illegal activity carried out by President Trump and his associates. Mr. Barr's criticism of the Special Counsel, captured in a memo to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, raises concerns about Mr. Barr's willingness to tamper with the investigation or dismiss the Special Counsel if confirmed as Attorney General.

In addition, Mr. Barr's extensive ties to powerful companies calls into question his ability to hold his friends and associates inside corporate America accountable. Mr. Barr is tied to several major issues pending with federal agencies such as the Justice Department, including Verizon, where he received \$16 million in compensation in one year alone. What's more, the companies Mr. Barr is associated with have faced regulatory violations and criminal investigations, some accruing millions in fines.

Restore Public Trust urges you to inquire about the concerns raised in the accompanying report and encourage you and the members of your committee to consider the following ahead of Mr. Barr's confirmation hearing:

- Mr. Barr has criticized the Mueller investigation and has been vocal in his criticism of independent counsel law. How can the American people trust that the Mueller investigation won't be tampered with if Mr. Barr is confirmed as Attorney General?
- Mr. Barr's particularly extensive corporate background ties him to major issues still pending with federal agencies, including the Justice Department. Will Mr. Barr recuse himself from all cases involving Dominion Energy, Time Warner, Caterpillar, and Verizon/GTE?
- Mr. Barr was criticized for excessive compensation at Verizon, where he earned a total of \$16 million in one year alone. Mr. Barr also approved large bonuses for executives on corporate boards despite, for example, missing safety goals. How can Mr. Barr defend the interests of Americans when he has rewarded executives who have disregarded worker safety?

- Companies tied to Mr. Barr have faced major environmental regulatory violations resulting in millions in fines. Will Mr. Barr favor large corporations who pollute over the clean air and clean water of Americans?
- A hedge fund tied to Mr. Barr faced serious charges involving bribery and fraud, one resulting in a \$412 million fine. With colleagues like these, what else could Mr. Barr be hiding in his past?
- Mr. Barr is known for aggressive lobbying tactics on behalf of corporations. Will his decades-long career of favoring corporations lead him to an unfair and unjust preference towards big corporations over government regulations intended to protect smaller companies and individuals?
- Mr. Barr has supported President Trump, despite his controversial actions. How can Mr. Barr be a true arbiter of justice when Trump has repeatedly ignored and held contempt for the law?

Attached you will find the full report issued by Restore Public Trust, an organization established to encourage accountability and transparency in government to root out corruption and malfeasance, which details Mr. Barr's substantial conflicts of interest. Thank you for your consideration of these facts. We look forward to your acute attention to these issues during Mr. Barr's formal consideration process.

Sincerely,

Caroline Ciccone
Executive Director
Restore Public Trust