



July 9th, 2019

Honorable Elijah Cummings
Rayburn House Office Building,
2163 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20515

Allied Progress
1875 Connecticut Ave NW, Floor 10
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Chairman Cummings:

On behalf of Allied Progress, a leading consumer advocacy group, I am writing to encourage you to use your power as House Oversight and Reform Committee Chairman to open an investigation into the misconduct of United States Labor Secretary Alex Acosta with regard to his plea bargain negotiations with Jeffrey Epstein in 2008.

As you know, on Monday, July 8th, Epstein was charged with sex trafficking in the Southern District of New York. This overdue step towards real justice comes more than a decade after Epstein accepted a plea deal with the Southern District of Florida, an office then led by Alex Acosta, that allowed Epstein back into society after a slap-on-the wrist. Rather than serve the serious prison time his crimes called for, Epstein got a 'country club' jail sentence of 15 months with cushy work release privileges. A federal judge even [ruled on Feb. 21st](#) that Acosta actually broke the law by failing to disclose this inexcusably lenient plea deal to the victims and their families.

This matter has already been under investigation by the Department of Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) since early February, but we maintain the strong view that such an investigation is not capable of going far enough because it lacks subpoena power and can only issue non-binding disciplinary recommendations. Not to mention that OPR has a reputation of secrecy with regard to its probes, which can undercut public accountability.

In February, Allied Progress sent letters to every member of the Senate Judiciary Committee requesting that they give the Department of Justice's Inspector General the authority he asked for to conduct a serious investigation into Acosta's prosecutorial misconduct by moving forward on H.R. 202, the [Inspector General Access Act](#), which already cleared the House with bipartisan support. However, Chairman Lindsey Graham has only allowed it to collect dust in Committee. The Senate has refused to act, so it is time for a new approach.

Serious questions still need to be answered about why Acosta let a billionaire money manager back on the streets and jetting across continents despite appalling allegations of child sex abuse involving [over 100](#) underage girls. Acosta continues to insist he acted appropriately, even bragging during his confirmation hearing for Labor Secretary that he considered his handling of the case a "point of pride" and that the outcome was a "good thing".

We think you would agree that justice has not been served in this case and that a Congressional investigation into the matter is not just appropriate, but necessary to help prevent similar prosecutorial misconduct in the future. A serial sex offender has roamed free for the last ten years instead of sitting in a prison cell all the while the prosecutor who allowed that to happen has been promoted to an even greater position of public trust.

Given Speaker Nancy Pelosi's calls for Acosta's resignation as Labor Secretary, we believe it is all the more critical that the facts behind how and why this happened are fully brought to light. We look forward to your swift action to finally hold those responsible who allowed this monster to walk the streets the last ten years.

Respectfully,

Kyle Herrig
Senior Advisor, Allied Progress