May 10, 2022

Dr. Rochelle Walensky
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

Dear Director Walensky:

We write to you regarding a recent report that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tracked location data from millions of Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the report, the CDC spent $420,000 to acquire the data from a controversial data broker company SafeGraph.¹ The report states the data was used to monitor Americans as they visited neighbors, schools, pharmacies, gyms, and even their place of worship.

If this report is accurate, the CDC committed a gross violation of American’s civil liberties guaranteed under the 4th Amendment. Americans have the right to live their lives without fear of being watched by a government agency. It is especially crucial that Americans feel safe practicing their most sacred constitutional right, freedom of religion, without fear of persecution.

The report claims that the CDC even used this data to track Americans walking around their neighborhoods and attempted to extrapolate information to see if people were using exercise as chronic illness prevention. This monitoring is a massive overstep of the CDC’s roles and responsibilities.

Additionally, the data broker firm, SafeGraph has a chronic history of being accused of selling the personal data of millions of Americans. The company has been banned from several app stores, including Google Play, for these egregious business practices.

The fact that the CDC would associate with such a company and feel comfortable violating the rights of millions of Americans is concerning and leads to many questions.

We request answers to the following questions:

1. What official(s) authorized the purchase of this data? Why was the company, SafeGraph, chosen given its controversial background?

2. Why was this data purchase authorized? Are there plans to punish Americans using this data? Were Americans notified that the CDC had collected their data?

3. Are there plans to continue to purchase location data of Americans from other companies? If so, will Americans be notified that their location data is being tracked?

4. Is the CDC still retaining this data? If so, where and how is the CDC storing the data? How is this personal data being safeguarded? Do Americans need to worry that their location information could be hacked or leaked?

5. Has this collected data been shared with other members of the interagency or with any private companies?

We look forward to your response and also request a detailed report explaining how this data was used and a justification for a clear violation of American’s rights. Please provide this information and all documents no later than May 27, 2022.

Sincerely,

Jody Hice (GA-10)
Member of Congress

Elise Stefanik (NY-21)
Member of Congress

Rick W. Allen (GA-12)
Member of Congress

Cliff Bentz (OR-02)
Member of Congress

Jack Bergman (MI-01)
Member of Congress

Andy Biggs (AZ-05)
Member of Congress

Dan Bishop (NC-09)
Member of Congress

Laruen Boebert (CO-03)
Member of Congress
Madison Cawthorn (NC-11)
Member of Congress

Mike Carey (OH-15)
Member of Congress

Michael Cloud (TX-27)
Member of Congress

Ben Cline (VA-06)
Member of Congress

Warren Davidson (OH-08)
Member of Congress

Andrew Clyde (GA-09)
Member of Congress

Scott DesJarlais, M.D. (TN-04)
Member of Congress

Rodney Davis (IL-13)
Member of Congress

Jeff Duncan (SC-03)
Member of Congress

Byron Donalds (FL-19)
Member of Congress

Charles "Chuck" Fleischmann (TN-03)
Member of Congress

Jake Ellzey (TX-05)
Member of Congress

Bob Good (VA-05)
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Louie Gohmert (TX-01)
Member of Congress

Glenn Grothman (WI-06)
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Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S. (AZ-04)
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Vicky Hartzler
Vicky Hartzler (MO-04)
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Clay Higgins
Clay Higgins (LA-03)
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Billy Long
Billy Long (MO-07)
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Nancy Mace
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W. Gregory Steube
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Member of Congress

Chris Stewart
Chris Stewart (UT-02)
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Tom Tiffany
Tom Tiffany (WI-07)
Member of Congress

Jeff Van Drew
Jeff Van Drew (NJ-02)
Member of Congress

Randy Weber
Randy Weber (TX-14)
Member of Congress