



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500

May 11, 2020

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your April 3, 2020, letter in which you and 16 other U.S. Senators requested that the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General (DoD OIG) investigate the Navy's response to reports of the coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) outbreak aboard the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* among other matters. In your letter, you urged the DoD OIG to evaluate whether the Navy is implementing "all appropriate precautionary measures and best practices" to protect the safety of the fleet.

As you are aware, Acting Secretary of the Navy James McPherson has directed Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Gilday to conduct an investigation into the outbreak of COVID-19 aboard the USS *Roosevelt* and the events that led to the removal of Captain (CAPT) Brett Crozier as the ship's commander. Given this ongoing Navy investigation, the DoD OIG does not currently plan to initiate a separate investigation focused on CAPT Crozier's dismissal.

However, today we announced a new project, "Evaluation of the Navy's Plans and Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak Onboard Ships and Submarines." The objective of this evaluation is to determine whether the Navy has implemented policies and procedures to prevent and mitigate the spread of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, on ships and submarines. For your convenience, attached is a copy of the full project announcement.

We are sharing this information with other Members of Congress who expressed interest in these matters to the DoD OIG. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me at (703) 604-8324.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael C. Zola".

Michael C. Zola, Esq.
Assistant Inspector General,
Legislative Affairs & Communications

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
The Honorable Sherrod Brown

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
The Honorable Edward J. Markey
The Honorable Patrick Leahy
The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
The Honorable Bernard Sanders
The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
The Honorable Michael F. Bennet
The Honorable Christopher S. Murphy
The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Tina Smith
The Honorable Gary C. Peters
The Honorable Brian Schatz