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Gurbir S. Grewal
 Attorney General



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For Immediate Release:

March 31, 2020

Office of The Attorney General

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Attorney General Grewal Leads Coalition Calling for Federal Government to Focus on COVID-19 and Place a Hold on Other New Rules

Americans Focused on Public Health Emergency Have Little Time to Respond to New Federal Rules, Which May Have Unintended Effects Due to Current Crisis

[View Rule Letter](#)

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal today led a coalition of 21 Attorneys General in calling on the Trump Administration to focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact and freeze most other federal rulemaking actions.

In a letter today to the Acting Director of the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Attorneys General note that state and local governments across the nation remain focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and combating spread of the deadly novel coronavirus.

Against that backdrop, the letter urges the federal government to halt most rulemaking unrelated to COVID-19. It also asks the Administration to consider reopening closed public-comment periods, so federal agencies can receive fresh input from state and local governments, businesses and others affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic consequences.

“Nothing is more important for New Jersey right now than stopping the spread of COVID-19 and ensuring that our residents get the health care and financial support they need during the pandemic,” said Attorney General Grewal. “We need the federal government to stay focused, too. So we are calling on the Administration to prioritize its response to COVID-19, and its economic fallout, instead of pushing through rules that don’t address the most urgent needs of people in New Jersey and across the country.” Beyond calling on the federal government to dedicate itself to rules related to COVID-19, the Attorneys General call for a general freeze on all new and pending rules other than those that address emergency situations or other urgent circumstances relating to health, safety, financial, or national security matters, and those required by statutes or court decisions.

The Trump Administration adopted the same kind of freeze on the President’s first day in office, the letter notes.

Among the rule proposals that could be postponed if the federal government were to prioritize rulemaking related to COVID-19 are proposals that would eliminate or roll back protections against predatory lending, housing discrimination, sexual harassment

and violence in education, and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in federally funded programs.

Other proposals that could be delayed—including cutbacks in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or food stamps—would affect far more Americans today than when they were originally proposed because of the recent economic downturn.

The letter notes that federal agencies already have taken some steps to prioritize resources to focus on COVID-19, and that some federal agencies have already extended rulemaking comment periods in response to the pandemic.

Joining Attorney General Grewal in today’s call for a freeze on federal rulemaking were the Attorneys General for: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia.

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