

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 23, 2018

Mr. Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice
Office of the Inspector General
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.,
Suite 4706
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Inspector General Horowitz;

We write today to ask you to open a formal investigation into the scam being perpetrated on injured and ill 9/11 responders. Responders have contacted our offices and the September 11th Victims Compensation Fund (VCF), which is overseen by the Department of Justice, to report that they have received calls from people purporting to be from the VCF, who are asking for social security numbers, birthdays, credit card numbers and other sensitive information.

While we are pleased that the FTC has issued a consumer alert warning about the scam, we urgently need to find out how these scammers gained access to the names and contact information of the 9/11 community. These 9/11 first responders have spent countless years fighting for both access to care and compensation for their efforts following the terrorist attacks, and it is particularly despicable that they are now being targeted by individuals seeking to harm them and use their private information for financial gain.

In addition to responders, it appears that the perpetrators of this scam are also targeting staff at the law firms that have helped process the VCF applications on their behalf. For these reasons, we believe that there must be a common source for information among the people targeted. We request that your office use your investigatory powers to work with the VCF to track and identify the data source that allowed scammers access to this private information. By determining the source the data, we may be able to prevent more 9/11 responders from becoming a target.

This scam is a new low that puts our most vulnerable first responders and their families at risk. We urge you to take swift action to begin a formal investigation that will protect these heroes who put their own lives at risk following the terrorist attacks on 9/11. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Charles Schumer
United States Senator