



THE SENATE
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April 28, 2020

The Honorable Dana Nessel, Attorney General
525 W. Ottawa Street
P.O. Box 30212
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Attorney General Nessel:

As I'm sure your office has been made aware, information recently came to light that showed officials within Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's administration disregarded the state's procurement process in selecting a firm with links to the Michigan Democratic State Central Committee to manage a large-scale public health tracing effort.

I would ask that your office open a thorough investigation into the details surrounding the contract and the decision-making process that was involved in selecting the firm as a vendor.

The firm in question, Great Lakes Community Engagement, is widely understood to be run by a Michigan-based Democratic consultant who conducted nearly \$500,000 worth of business with the Michigan Democratic Party in the 2018 election cycle.

Further, the EveryAction software firm is linked to a technology provider, NGP VAN, that runs Democratic campaigns. This firm was previously given a contract by the state to help track the spread of coronavirus prior to the hiring of Great Lakes Community Engagement. It may be also worth noting that the governor's campaign itself has employed NPG VAN for its political purposes.

The administration hiring a Democratic campaign organization with taxpayer dollars to collect the personal information of Michiganders is troubling, to say the least.

Moreover, the reported no-bid nature of the contract and the secretive process behind it should raise eyebrows as well. The governor herself has stated that the contract went through the Department of Health and Human Services, and not through the State Emergency Operations Center, which is overseen by the Michigan State Police and where the contract should have been authorized. When viewed in its entirety, this episode is troubling.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure accountability within state government. The best way to exercise that accountability and to ensure public confidence is to investigate the matter sooner rather than later.

I have long pushed for more public transparency — regardless of party. Especially in times of distress, Michiganders are best served when they can trust the openness and honesty of their governmental institutions. For that to be the case, an honest investigation into the matter is not only warranted, but required. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Most respectfully,

Jim Runestad
Michigan State Senator
15th Senate District