

February 21, 2013

Jeffrey Zients  
Deputy Director for Management  
White House Office of Management and Budget  
Executive Office Building  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Zients,

Much is being made about the possible impact of sequestration on government programs for the poor and middle class, food safety, and the defense of our nation. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, for the White House to be headlining a 100 city government spending tour, transporting representatives from multiple departments and various agencies around the country to promote federal largess. If Washington is truly cutting spending on missions many consider vital, how can we at the same time promise and promote more financial assistance, much less afford this mammoth 100 city cross country tour?

The first stop of the 100 city "Connecting to Your Community" tour in Beaverton, Oregon featured representatives from the White House, the Department of Labor, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.<sup>1</sup> While the city most likely appreciated so many officials traveling across the country to visit, Beaverton has already proven itself quite adept at obtaining federal funds which makes the trip seem even more unnecessary. Since 2011, the city has received nearly \$2 million in federal grants and assistance. Beaverton has even hired a consulting firm to apply for grants and the mayor's "travels to the nation's capital exceed those of his predecessors."<sup>2</sup> In 2011, the Mayor and nine other city and county representatives, for example, spent two full weeks in Washington, D.C. to visit with various federal officials and lobby for federal aid.<sup>3</sup> The same information presented at the daylong symposium could have been shared with the mayor during his next visit to Washington or with the city's consulting firm via electronic communication such as a teleconference, website, or email to save taxpayers money.

While well intentioned, I urge you to cancel the 100 city government spending tour.

<sup>1</sup> "BEAVERTON REVITALIZATION ROUNDTABLE: Building Partnerships for Community Revitalization among the City of Beaverton, the Obama Administration, State Officials & Other Key Stakeholders," Beaverton Revitalization Roundtable agenda, City of Beaverton, Oregon website, February 14, 2013;

[http://apps.beavertonoregon.gov/departments/CDD/sustainability/docs/RevitalizationRoundtableAgenda\\_FINAL02122013.pdf](http://apps.beavertonoregon.gov/departments/CDD/sustainability/docs/RevitalizationRoundtableAgenda_FINAL02122013.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Nicole Friedman, "Beaverton to host first of 100 White House meetings on federal-city cooperation," *The Oregonian*, February 12, 2013; [http://www.oregonlive.com/beaverton/index.ssf/2013/02/beaverton\\_to\\_host\\_first\\_of\\_100.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/beaverton/index.ssf/2013/02/beaverton_to_host_first_of_100.html).

<sup>3</sup> "Mayor Doyle's Washington DC Trip Highlights," Beaverton City Government Facebook page; April 29, 2011; <https://www.facebook.com/notes/beaverton-city-government/mayor-doyles-washington-dc-trip-highlights/182276401821371>.

I would also request the following information:

- The total cost to the federal government for participation and support of the Beaverton Revitalization Roundtable;
- The total number of federal employees who traveled to Beaverton for the Revitalization Roundtable; and
- A complete listing of the other locations on the 100 city tour along with the dates for each event, an estimate of the number of federal employees attending each event, the projected or actual cost of each event, and a total estimated cost of the entire 100 city tour initiative including planning, travel, and staff time.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would appreciate a response no later than April 1, 2013. It is important that we as public officials lead by example and I look forward to continuing to work with you to save taxpayers money and better prioritize government spending.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Coburn", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom A. Coburn, M.D.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security  
and Governmental Affairs