

Sent by electronic mail: [REDACTED]

August 27, 2020

Rep. Matt Hall
[REDACTED]

Sen. Aric Nesbitt
[REDACTED]

Dear Representative Hall and Senator Nesbitt:

This will respond to your letter of August 17, 2020.

As the Coronavirus Emergency was first developing in March, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) staff requested possible referrals for entities with organizing expertise. DHHS did not inform me whether it was seeking voluntary participation in a task force, or whether it envisioned a contractual relationship. I submitted the name of an entity with the type of organizing background I understood they were seeking.

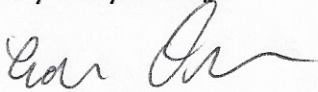
This referral was my sole and limited involvement in this matter. It is my understanding that you have already been advised of the same by Director Robert Gordon from DHHS. It is my further understanding that the names of those involved in this matter on behalf of DHHS have been provided to you, and publicly reported.

As for the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) situation, at no time have I ever worked for or supervised UIA. As has been widely reported, a number of Michigan companies and individuals trying to access the UIA system experienced some confusion and delays resulting from the sudden and rapid rise in unemployment claims. Many lost in the UIA process reached out to state government with questions, some to members of the Executive Branch and some to their State Legislators. When I received these inquiries, I referred them to the appropriate UIA division. I had no role in the UIA's handling of any of these claims after making the referrals.

When a member of the Michigan House of Representatives requested the Auditor General review this matter, I readily agreed to that Agency's request to be interviewed. That report, issued July 31st by the Auditor General, does not suggest that my actions were in any way inappropriate. I do not have anything to add beyond what I told the Auditor General. My only role in these matters was to respond promptly and professionally to requests for assistance and to make referrals to the appropriate agencies. At no point did I have any role in DHHS or UIA deliberations or decisions on these issues.

On the basis of the foregoing, I must respectfully decline your request to attend a hearing of the Joint Select Committee on the COVID-19 Pandemic, and would refer you to the Auditor General or to those involved in the decisions and subject matter you are asking about. Thank you for your consideration.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Duggan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward Duggan