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The Covid Money Trail

U.S. watchdogs guarding \$5 trillion in covid aid say they need more money

As the Biden administration ramps up its work to target waste, fraud and abuse, a series of early pandemic missteps – and lingering budget woes – create headaches for the nation’s inspectors general.

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By [Tony Romm](#) and [Yeganeh Torbati](#)

Michael Horowitz came to Congress with a plea: If the U.S. government truly hoped to keep track of roughly \$5 trillion in coronavirus aid, then federal watchdog agencies would need some new money of their own.

It was June 2022, more than two years after the pandemic first arrived in the United States — and Horowitz, the leader of the country’s chief pandemic oversight body, said some of the government’s top officials could use the help. Criminals already had bilked billions of dollars from generous programs meant to help jobless Americans and small businesses in need, and Washington faced long, costly work to try to get it all back.