TREY GOWDY, SOUTH CAROLINA
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ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143
MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
http://oversight.house.gov

August 8, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We are writing to request documents related to federal funds expended by your Department – including all agencies within the Department – on products or services provided by businesses owned by or affiliated with the Trump Organization.

The American people deserve to know how their tax dollars are spent, including the amount of federal funds that are being provided to private businesses owned by the President and the purposes of these expenditures.

Against the advice of ethics experts from both parties, President Trump has chosen to break with modern precedent and become the first President in four decades not to liquidate his assets and place them in a truly blind and diversified trust.[1] Instead, President Trump has placed his assets in a revocable trust from which he can withdraw any amount of money he wants whenever he chooses to do so.[2]

The President's financial entanglements make it impossible to know whether he is making his decisions in the public interest or to benefit to him or his family members financially. The President's continued ownership of private businesses also places federal employees in compromised positions when they work on official activities that potentially create financial benefits for the President or his family members.

For example, the *Washington Post* recently reported that the Department of State "spent more than $15,000 to book 19 rooms at the new Trump hotel in Vancouver when members of

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[1] *Trump's 'Blind Trust' is Neither Blind Nor Trustworthy,* Richard Painter and Norman Eisen, *Washington Post* (Nov. 15, 2016) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/trumps-blind-trust-is-neither-blind-nor-trustworthy/2016/11/15/6eeca1fc-aaa5-11e6-a31b-4b6397e625d0_story.html?utm_term=.12e17e67de81).

[2] *Trump Lawyer Confirms President Can Pull Money From His Businesses Whenever He Wants,* ProPublica (April 4, 2017) (online at www.propublica.org/article/trump-pull-money-his-businesses-whenever-he-wants-without-telling-us).

President Trump's family headlined the grand opening of the tower in late February." According to the article, "A State Department official did not answer questions about who stayed at the Trump hotel and the reasons for their stay."[3]

This follows reports that the State Department previously spent "$9,510 for hotel rooms to assist the Secret Service" in conjunction with "Eric Trump's business trip to Uruguay in early January to promote a Trump hotel and condominium tower."[4]

It also appears that federal funds have flowed to Trump family businesses via other channels. For instance, the *Washington Post* has reported that the Department of Defense is renting space at Trump Tower.[5]

President Trump is also receiving federal housing assistance payments as a result of his 4% ownership interest in Starrett City Associates, L.P.[6] Starrett City is the nation's largest federally subsidized residential property.[7] Under a housing assistance payment contract with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 3,569 units in the complex receive federal housing assistance.[8] According to the *Washington Post*, Starrett City's owners have received "more than $490 million in rent subsidies since May 2013."[9]

President Trump also makes frequent trips to properties he owns, and these trips may result in U.S. taxpayers' money flowing into President Trump's pockets. For example, by April 2017, President Trump reportedly had made seven trips totaling 25 days to his private club in

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[3] *State Department Spent More than $15,000 for Rooms at New Trump Hotel in Vancouver*, Washington Post (July 12, 2017) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/politics/state-department-spent-more-than-15000-for-rooms-at-new-trump-hotel-in-vancouver/2017/07/12/5eba5d0c-61bf-11e7-84a1-a26b75ad39fe_story.html?utm_term=.c7f19c8b7ca0).

[4] *Id. See also Eric Trump's Business Trip to Uruguay Cost Taxpayers $97,830 in Hotel Bills*, Washington Post (Feb. 3, 2017) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/eric-trumps-trip-to-uruguay-cost-taxpayers-97830-in-hotel-bills/2017/02/03/ababd64e-e95c-11e6-bf6f-301b6b443624_story.html?utm_term=.a8a6a128687a).

[5] *Department of Defense Looks to Rent Space in Trump Tower*, Washington Post (Feb. 7, 2017) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/department-of-defense-looks-to-rent-space-in-trump-tower/2017/02/07/6dec7252-edb0-11e6-9662-6eedf1627882_story.html?utm_term=.4251c4d17221).

[6] Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report for Donald J. Trump (OGE Form 278e) (June 2017) (online at www.documentcloud.org/documents/3867112-Trump-Financial-Disclosure-2017.html).

[7] *After Two Years of Trying, Owners Give Up on Selling Starrett City*, New York Times (Feb. 17, 2009) (online at www.nytimes.com/2009/02/18/nyregion/18starrett.html).

[8] Renewal HAP Contract for Section 8 Mark-Up-to-Market Project Between New York State Housing Trust Corporation and Starrett City Associates, L.P. (Dec. 2009).

[9] *Trump Seeks Sharp Cuts to Housing Aid, Except for Program that Brings Him Millions*, Washington Post (June 20, 2017) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/trump-seeks-sharp-cuts-to-housing-aid-except-for-program-that-brings-him-millions/2017/06/20/bf1fb2b8-5531-11e7-ba90-f5875b7d1876_story.html?utm_term=.4ac1261ec736).

Florida, Mar-a-Lago.[10] *Politico* estimated that each of these trips may have incurred as much as $3 million in federal costs.[11]

President Trump also has made several trips to his property in New Jersey, the Trump National Golf Club-Bedminster, claiming in tweets that staying there "saves country money" and that "staying in NYC is much more expensive."[12]

However, the Trump Administration has not disclosed the total amount of federal expenditures associated with the President's trips to Mar-a-Lago, Bedminster—or any properties he owns—and it has not disclosed whether expenditures by the federal government were paid to the President's properties or whether the President benefited financially from these expenditures.

There may be other expenditures of American taxpayer funds at Trump properties that are not yet publicly known. Federal agencies and their employees may be hosting events or renting hotel rooms at Trump properties, eating meals at Trump property restaurants, or contracting for equipment rentals with Trump businesses.

**Request for Documents**

In order to identify the total amount of taxpayer funds being expended by the U.S. government to businesses owned by or affiliated with President Trump, please provide the following documents by August 25, 2017:

1. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department to the Trump Organization or the President's trust;

2. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department to any business in which the Trump Organization has an ownership stake;

3. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department to any business with which the Trump Organization has any licensing agreement or similar contractual relationship, including any business that bears the name "Trump" in its title; and

4. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department in conjunction with any travel undertaken by any member of the Trump family to promote a business in which the Trump Organization has any ownership stake, licensing agreement, or similar contractual arrangement.

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[10] *Everything Donald Trump Has Done at Mar-a-Lago Since Becoming President*, Town & Country (Apr. 17, 2017) (online at www.townandcountrymag.com/society/politics/news/a9923/doanld-trump-mar-a-lago/).

[11] *Trump's Mar-a-Lago Getaway Could Cost Taxpayers More than $3 Million*, Politico (Feb. 3, 2017) (online www.politico.com/story/2017/02/trump-mar-lago-taxpayers-234562).

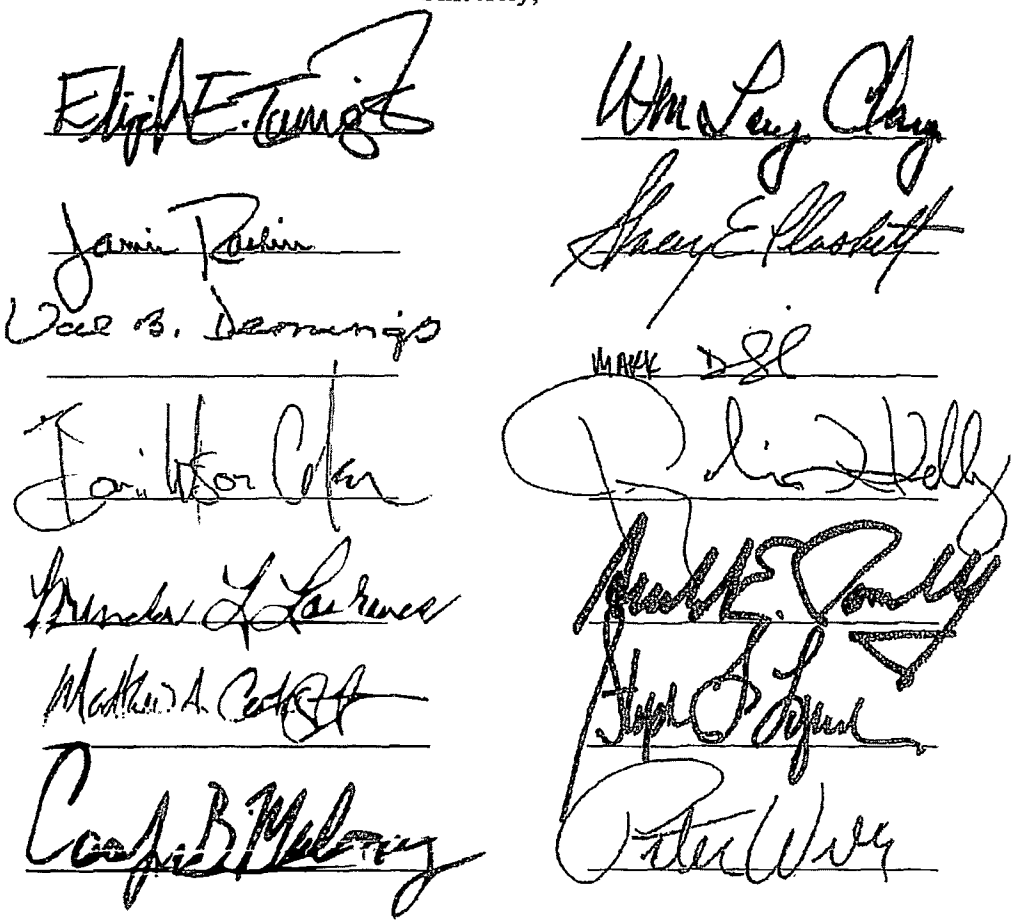
[12] *White House Opaque on Trump's Travel Costs*, ABC News (May 8, 2017) (online at www.abcnews.go.com/amp/Politics/wireStory/ap-fact-check-white-house-opaque-trumps-travel-47279616).

When producing documents to the Committee, please deliver production sets to the Majority staff in Room 2157 of the Rayburn House Office Building and the Minority staff in Room 2471 of the Rayburn House Office Building. The Committee prefers, if possible, to receive all documents in electronic format.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and may at "any time" investigate "any matter" as set forth in House Rule X.

Please contact Lucinda Lessley with the Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



cc: The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chaimrnn

## Eades, Cassaundra

**From:** Dickerson, Tom
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 08, 2017 2:01 PM
**To:** Eades, Cassaundra
**Cc:** Mims, Kathy
**Subject:** RE: Letter to Administrator Pruitt from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Here's what they sent:

Elijah E. Cummings (MD), Ranking Minority Member Carolyn B. Maloney (NY) Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC) Wm. Lacy Clay (MO) Stephen F. Lynch (MA) Jim Cooper (TN) Gerald E. Connolly (VA) Robin L. Kelly (IL) Brenda L. Lawrence (MI) Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ) Stacey E. Plaskett (VI) Val Butler Demings (FL) Raja Krishnamoorthi (IL) Jamie Raskin (MD) Peter Welch (VT) Matt Cartwright (PA) Mark DeSaulnier (CA) Jimmy Gomez (CA)

Tom Dickerson
Office of Congressional Relations
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
(202) 564-3638

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**From:** Eades, Cassaundra
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 08, 2017 11:51 AM
**To:** Dickerson, Tom <Dickerson.Tom@epa.gov>
**Cc:** Mims, Kathy <Mims.Kathy@epa.gov>
**Subject:** RE: Letter to Administrator Pruitt from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Tom – Can we get a list of the signers

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**From:** Dickerson, Tom
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 08, 2017 10:58 AM
**To:** Aarons, Kyle <Aarons.Kyle@epa.gov>; Baptist, Erik <baptist.erik@epa.gov>; Bennett, Tate <Bennett.Tate@epa.gov>; Blake, Wendy <Blake.Wendy@epa.gov>; Cheatham-Strickland, Latonia <Cheatham-Strickland.Latonia@epa.gov>; Gonzalez, Brenda <gonzalez.brenda@epa.gov>; Kelly, Lynn <Kelly.Lynn@epa.gov>; Lyons, Troy <lyons.troy@epa.gov>; Palich, Christian <palich.christian@epa.gov>; Richardson, RobinH <Richardson.RobinH@epa.gov>; Ringel, Aaron <ringel.aaron@epa.gov>; Shimmin, Kaitlyn <shimmin.kaitlyn@epa.gov>; Sweeney, Edward <Sweeney.Edward@epa.gov>; Trudeau, Shaun <Trudeau.Shaun@epa.gov>; Youngblood, Charlotte <Youngblood.Charlotte@epa.gov>
**Cc:** Eades, Cassaundra <Eades.Cassaundra@epa.gov>; Mims, Kathy <Mims.Kathy@epa.gov>
**Subject:** FW: Letter to Administrator Pruitt from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

New oversight letter just in from Rep. Cummings et al. (HOGR minority) asking for the following documents by August 25th:

1. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department to the Trump Organization or the President's trust;
2. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department to any business in which the Trump Organization has an ownership stake;
3. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department to any business with which the Trump Organization has any licensing agreement or similar contractual relationship, including any business

that bears the name "Trump" in its title; and

4. all documents relating to or regarding any expenditure made by any entity within your department in conjunction with any travel undertaken by any member of the Trump family to promote a business in which the Trump Organization has any ownership stake, licensing agreement, or similar contractual arrangement.

Tom Dickerson
Office of Congressional Relations
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
(202) 564-3638

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**From:** LaNier, Elisa [mailto:Elisa.LaNier@mail.house.gov]
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 08, 2017 10:34 AM
**To:** Dickerson, Tom <Dickerson.Tom@epa.gov>
**Cc:** Grooms, Susanne Sachsman <Susanne.Grooms@mail.house.gov>
**Subject:** Letter to Administrator Pruitt from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Hi,

Please see letter attached from the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Please acknowledge receipt of letter.

Thanks