

# CONGRESSIONAL INTEGRITY PROJECT

May 04, 2023

The Honorable James Comer  
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Reform  
2105 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Comer:

This week, you stated plainly “the American people need to know” if our nation’s leaders “sold out the United States of America” for profit.<sup>1</sup> In media appearances, you have shared your deeply held concerns about political leaders allegedly using their public office to “engage in influence peddling with our adversaries . . . most [concerningly], China.”<sup>2</sup> You have further stated that government officials seeking to curry favor from foreign governments for personal gain would be especially problematic because it presents a clear “national security risk” to the United States.<sup>3</sup>

We are writing to assist you in your efforts to hold actual corrupt government officials accountable for business deals with foreign adversaries that demonstrate a disturbing willingness to put personal interests ahead of our national security. We are confident the potential conflicts of interest we have identified are of vital importance to anyone with a sincere desire to prevent corrupt business deals from influencing U.S. foreign policy.

To that end, we feel it our duty to make you aware of clear conflicts of interest involving foreign adversaries carried out by then White House Senior Advisor Jared Kushner, a staffer so involved in executing the nation’s foreign policy he was labeled a “shadow Secretary of State.”<sup>4</sup> During his time in the White House, Kushner held secret meetings with foreign officials which he failed to coordinate with or report to the National Security Council.<sup>5</sup> Simultaneously, his family

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<https://oversight.house.gov/release/grassley-comer-demand-fbi-record-alleging-criminal-scheme-involving-then-vp-biden/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/video/6316573410112>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.axios.com/2017/12/15/the-shadow-secretary-of-state-1513301526>

<sup>5</sup>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kushners-overseas-contacts-raise-concerns-as-foreign-officials-seek-leverage/2018/02/27/16bbc052-18c3-11e8-942d-16a950029788\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kushners-overseas-contacts-raise-concerns-as-foreign-officials-seek-leverage/2018/02/27/16bbc052-18c3-11e8-942d-16a950029788_story.html)

“courted state-connected investors in China and the Middle East” to bail out his family’s business.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, in the Trump administration’s first year, “a real estate firm tied to the Kushner family made a direct appeal to the government of Qatar to invest” in a financially troubled property.<sup>7</sup> A firm closely connected to the government of Qatar gave the Kushner family business \$1 billion after Qatari officials reportedly suggested Kushner’s support for a Saudi-led blockade of Qatar was retaliation for the government’s refusal to do the business deal.<sup>8</sup>

Upon leaving the White House, Jared Kushner’s business received a \$2 billion investment from a Saudi investment firm.<sup>9</sup> Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who once bragged that Jared Kushner was “in his pocket,”<sup>10</sup> ensured the \$2 billion loan was approved despite the fact that the investment “encountered skepticism from Public Investment Fund officials.”<sup>11</sup>

Alarming, foreign officials from nations including China and the United Arab Emirates had “privately discussed ways they can manipulate Jared Kushner...by taking advantage of his complex business arrangements [and] financial difficulties.”<sup>12</sup> Likely as a result of these glaring potential conflicts of interest, two career security specialists rejected Jared Kushner’s request for a top-secret clearance<sup>13</sup>, but President Trump overruled them.<sup>14</sup>

Another White House Senior Advisor, Ivanka Trump, pursued corrupt business deals with foreign adversaries that surely merits your scrutiny. While handling a White House portfolio that “include[d] interacting with heads of state and working with...international corporate chiefs on economic programs,”<sup>15</sup> she “retained a stake in the family business” in addition to her fashion brands.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/11/us/politics/donald-trump-jr-eric-trump-business.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gq.com/story/trump-kids-profit-presidency>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/us/politics/jared-kushner-house-investigation.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2018/03/21/jared-kushner-saudi-crown-prince-mohammed-bin-salman/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/us/politics/jared-kushner-house-investigation.html>

<sup>12</sup>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kushners-overseas-contacts-raise-concerns-as-foreign-officials-seek-leverage/2018/02/27/16bbc052-18c3-11e8-942d-16a950029788\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kushners-overseas-contacts-raise-concerns-as-foreign-officials-seek-leverage/2018/02/27/16bbc052-18c3-11e8-942d-16a950029788_story.html)

<sup>13</sup>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/officials-rejected-jared-kushner-top-secret-security-clearance-were-overruled-n962221>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/28/us/politics/jared-kushner-security-clearance.html>

<sup>15</sup>

<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2019-10-10/trumps-adult-children-do-business-overseas-as-president-slams-biden>

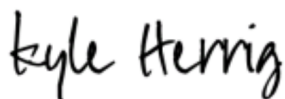
<sup>16</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/11/us/politics/donald-trump-jr-eric-trump-business.html>

Due to your special concern about foreign entanglements with China, we want to make you aware that the communist government awarded Ivanka “three preliminary trademark approvals for jewelry, handbags and spa services” on the exact same day she and President Trump dined with Chinese President Xi Jinping.<sup>17</sup> By May of 2018, China gave Ivanka Trump “seven new trademarks across a broad collection of businesses, including books, housewares and cushions” that she applied for while holding an influential government position.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, newly discovered records indicate foreign government officials from nations including China, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia “spent more than \$750,000 at former president Donald Trump’s hotel in Washington as they were trying to influence his administration.”<sup>19</sup> As you are surely aware, former President Trump refused to divest from his business while president, effectively opening himself up to bribes from foreign adversaries.<sup>20</sup>

While we acknowledge it will be difficult to conduct proper oversight of all the corrupt business deals with foreign adversaries carried out by former President Trump and his family during their time in office with your limited time and resources, we are hopeful this letter has brought to your attention a small portion of the many concerning arrangements worth investigating. As you have made clear, such unethical behavior from these high ranking officials directly threatens our national security. Should you desire more examples of the damning evidence implicating President Trump and his family in influence peddling with foreign adversaries, we stand ready to assist you.

Sincerely,



Kyle Herrig, Executive Director  
Congressional Integrity Project

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<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2019-10-10/trumps-adult-children-do-business-overseas-as-president-slams-biden>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/28/business/ivanka-trump-china-trademarks.html>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/11/14/trump-hotel-foreign-government-spending/>

<sup>20</sup>

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-finance/trump-says-wont-divest-from-his-business-while-president-idUSKBN14V21I>