



**NEW REPORT**

# **James Comer's 8 Months of Abject Failure**

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**CONGRESSIONAL  
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PROJECT 

# NEW REPORT: James Comer's 8 Months of Abject Failure

*James Comer has been investigating President Biden for nearly a year. After months of political stunts, dozens of hearings, transcribed interviews, and memos, and despite hours on Fox peddling conspiracy theories, Comer and his MAGA crew have failed to find a single shred of evidence linking President Biden to any of their lurid accusations. In fact, Republicans have been forced to walk back claim after claim.*

*On the heels of Donald Trump's fourth indictment and in the wake of MAGA House Republicans' threat of impeachment proceedings when they come back from recess this September, let's take a quick trip down memory lane of just some of Jim Comer's face plants, walk backs, and failed accusations.*

## **August 2023: "Less Than A Phantom:" Comer's Latest Report Produced No Evidence of A Bribe.**

In early-August Comer released a new memo "Third Bank Records Memorandum from the Oversight Committee's Investigation into the Biden Family's Influence Peddling and Business Schemes," attacking the President for supposedly receiving bribes from foreign countries. Unfortunately for Comer, the memo was a [belly-flop with no evidence and no new information](#). POLITICO [reported](#): "But the memo, the third Comer has released so far this year, also doesn't show a direct payment to Joe Biden." A Washington Post [analysis](#) also summarized Comer's fishing expedition after the latest memo: "After three months, a period that clearly included more assessments of income received by Hunter Biden (though a lot of the \$20 million was already reported), there's not a whiff of the alleged \$5 million paid to Joe Biden by Zlochevsky. It's less than a phantom."

## **July 2023: Comer's Much-Hyped Whistleblower Testified Against His Claims About So-Called Interference With An Investigation Into Hunter Biden.**

James Comer spent months hyping up IRS whistleblowers that he claimed had damning evidence about the IRS's investigation into Hunter Biden. He got called out in April for misrepresenting his witnesses and keeping information from committee Democrats even before any witness testimony. In July, House Republicans held a hearing during which their own

witnesses [testified](#), under oath, that neither President Biden nor Attorney General Garland interfered in the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Justice’s investigation into Hunter Biden.

### **July 2023: Comer’s Supposed Star Witness Fails To Prove That President Biden Did Anything Wrong.**

In late July 2023, the day before Trump was indicted for a third time on charges related to the January 6th insurrection at the U.S. Capitol in 2021, a business associate of Hunter Biden appeared before the Oversight Committee to testify at the invitation of James Comer. For [weeks in advance](#), Comer hyped the upcoming interview as [bombshell testimony](#) and declared the testimony [evidence of a quid pro quo](#). But Archer’s testimony failed to produce a shred of evidence of a single conflict of interest of President Biden ever doing anything in connection or in relation to Hunter Biden’s business ventures. As [ABC](#) reported: “Archer testified that Joe Biden’s interactions with Hunter Biden’s associates were ‘not related to commercial business,’ that Joe Biden had no involvement with Burisma, the Ukrainian oil conglomerate on whose board both Archer and Hunter Biden served; that the elder Biden never took any actions to benefit Burisma or Hunter Biden; and that Hunter Biden never asked his father to take any actions that would help his clients, according to the fully transcribed interview with the committee.”

Comer also hyped a portion of testimony by Hunter Biden’s business associate Devon Archer suggesting that Joe Biden supposedly [joined](#) Hunter on speakerphone while speaking with business associates up to 20 times. The reality, however, was that Archer’s testimony referred to approximately 20 instances [over the span of a decade](#) in which Hunter indicated Joe Biden was merely present; Archer did not testify that President Biden was directly involved in business discussions beyond “the brand” – only that he held casual conversations about “the weather” and “fishing.”

- **Comer Lied About Skipping The So-Called Bombshell Testimony That Contradicted His Unsubstantiated Allegations About President Biden.** Comer himself could not be bothered to show up for Archer’s testimony despite [hyping](#) the upcoming interview for [weeks in advance](#), Comer hyped the upcoming interview as bombshell testimony. Yet even Oversight committee staffers were [unwilling to cover](#) for Comer’s lies, refusing to say if Comer phoned-in and saying he was in “constant contact” with staff during the interview. One GOP source even [said](#), “It was like following a general into battle, but the general decided to stay home instead of fight.”

### **May – July 2023: Comer and Grassley Failed To Produce Evidence of Bribery After Subpoenaing the FBI & Risking The Safety of Confidential Sources.**

In early-May, Comer and Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) published an open letter to the FBI announcing [subpoenas](#) for an unclassified document supposedly describing an alleged “criminal scheme involving then-Vice President Biden and a foreign national relating to the exchange of money for policy decisions.” Comer was immediately called out for pushing unsubstantiated allegations in the letter. The Associated Press [noted](#), “the lawmakers used the word 'alleged' three times in the opening paragraph of the letter and offered no evidence of the veracity of the accusations.” HuffPost reporters [concurred](#): “[Republicans] acknowledged they don’t know if the allegation will pan out. [...] backing the allegation despite the scarcity of details.”

When Comer and Grassley obtained the document, form FD-1023, and publicly released a redacted version in July – against the advice of intelligence officials who feared it would “unnecessarily risks the safety of a confidential source” – it ended up being an [uncorroborated FBI tip](#). **[Worse still, the owner of Ukrainian energy firm Burisma, had already rebutted the uncorroborated bribery allegations back in 2019](#)**: “As part of the impeachment inquiry against then-President Trump, Congress learned that Mr. Zlochevsky, the Ukrainian oligarch and the owner of Burisma, whom Republican Committee Members appear to have identified as the source of the allegations memorialized in the Form FD-1023, squarely rebutted these allegations in 2019.”

### **June 2023: Comer Repeatedly Claimed That Bribery Allegations Had Nothing To Do With Giuliani. Oops– Rudy Says It Was All Him.**

In [interview](#) after [interview](#) with friendly right-wing hosts, James Comer claimed that supposed bribery allegations against Joe Biden have [nothing to do with](#) disgraced Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani. The only problem with Comer’s vehement statements? They are not true. Rudy Giuliani himself has taken credit for first raising the allegations. **[Giuliani has said during several Newsmax TV appearances that he alerted the Justice Department to the allegation](#)**. “The document they’re talking about, the \$10 million bribe from Mykola Zlochevsky, it really is the tip of the iceberg,” Giuliani said on Newsmax on June 10. “That document was discovered because it was at least one FBI agent that went out and tried to corroborate what I gave them.”

### **June 2023: Comer Hyped So-Called Bribery Tapes. He Later Admitted... Not Knowing If They “Really Exist.”**

On June 8, 2023, former President Trump was charged with violating the Espionage Act and obstructing justice in an ongoing investigation related to classified documents, and was indicted in federal court in Florida. Just days later – surely a coincidence! – GOP Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Comer began hyping the potential existence of [audio tapes](#) supposedly proving President Biden accepted a \$5 million bribe from a Ukrainian energy company during the Obama administration. Yet despite hyping these claims for weeks on end, **[Comer later](#)**

**admitted, “we don’t know if they are legit or not” during a Newsmax interview just five days later.**

### **June – August 2023: Comer Falsely Claimed that the Biden Family Took More than \$20 Million from Foreign Nations.**

For months, Comer has claimed that President Biden and his family took in \$20 million from foreign sources. In June 2023, Comer took to Fox News at least twice to claim that the number would “[exceed \\$20 million](#)” or “[top out at \\$20 million plus.](#)” In July 2023, he claimed on [Ted Cruz's podcast](#) it takes “probably \$20 million” to buy a U.S. President, later noting “I feel like we’ll be able to hit the \$25 million mark [from foreign nations to Joe Biden and family].” On Fox News, he [claimed](#): “we think that we can find around \$20 million to \$30 million.” In August 2023, he doubled down on those allegations, claiming directly that they “[recieve\[d\] over \\$20 million illegally from foreign nationals](#)” and “[our enemies](#) around the world.” He also [claimed](#) that they “never paid a penny of taxes.” **But the evidence shows otherwise; according to the Washington Post, “A close reading of the memos, however, finds that only about \$7 million can be directly attributed to Biden family members, mostly Hunter, while the rest went to ‘associates,’ according to the memos.”**

Comer has also suggested that the Biden family used 21 so-called shell companies to launder money, claiming that they served no legitimate business function. But, as Washington Post fact-checkers [reported](#), “that claim is undercut by the list of 21 companies that appear in the second staff memo. **Virtually all of the companies (many of which now are defunct) had legitimate business interests.** Others had clearly identified business investments. Digging through the records, we find only three whose business purpose remains vague; one (Rosemont Seneca Global Risk Services, LLC) may not even be related to Hunter Biden, according to an email found in Hunter Biden’s laptop. The memos do not list any payments that flowed through these three companies. [...] Archer, in his interview, said he did not know if that was the case, but he insisted that Baturina was a Rosemont Realty client not connected to Hunter Biden. The staff memo, released after the Archer interview, [ignores](#) that comment.”

### **April & May 2023: Comer’s Second Bank Memo Failed To Produce Evidence Linking President Biden To Outlandish Claims.**

In May 2023, Comer and Oversight Republicans published their [second bank memo](#) attacking the President on supposed foreign business ties. As POLITICO [reported](#), “even as Republicans continue to rhetorically circle around Biden, much of the investigative effort they revealed on Wednesday centered around a network of businesses related to his family members and their associates. [...] [Oversight Republicans’ memo] also doesn’t show any way Biden’s decisions were influenced by those agreements or that he had direct knowledge of them. **And while**

**Republicans have criticized the payments as questionable, they stopped short of calling any of the activity potentially illegal.**

Even conservative critics called out Comer’s lack of evidence backing the memo, with Fox News host Steve Doocy [pushing back](#) during an interview with Comer: “That’s just your suggestion. You don’t actually have any facts to that point. You’ve got some circumstantial evidence. And the other thing is, of all those names, the one person who didn’t profit is that — there’s no evidence that Joe Biden did anything illegally.”

**April 2023: James Comer Blatantly Misrepresented Whistleblowers, Then Refused to Produce Evidence Substantiating His Claims.**

For months, Comer talked to the press about four individuals he [claimed](#) were “whistleblowers.” Problem is – they weren’t whistleblowers and there were only two people. As Ranking Member Raskin wrote to Comer in a letter obtained by [the Washington Post](#): “The two individuals your staff specifically identified as the individuals they understood to have been referenced during your March 6 Fox News interview, are not whistleblowers... your repeated statements about ‘four people’ suggest that either you have intentionally misrepresented the Committee’s investigative progress to your conservative audience or that key investigative steps have been deliberately withheld from Committee Democrats.”

- **Comer Invoked ‘Deep State’ Conspiracies Dozens of Times In Interviews, Claiming His Various Whistleblowers “Fear For Their Lives” From Biden Family & Unnamed Rogue Government Actors.** “As I said on Fox, [whistleblowers] fear for their lives, not just from the Biden family, from rogue intelligence people within our government.” [Brian Kilmeade Show, [5/1/23](#)]

**February 2023: In His First Oversight Hearing, Comer Pushed a “Factually Unsupported Narrative” About The ‘Twitter Files’.**

After one of the GOP House Oversight Committee’s first hearings, Chairman Comer got called out for pushing “a [factually unsupported narrative](#) about the federal government secretly colluding with Twitter,” despite “no real evidence to support this weighty and consequential claim.” During House Oversight’s first hearing, former Twitter Deputy General Counsel James Baker – one of the Republicans’ own witnesses – [told](#) the committee, “I am aware of [no unlawful collusion](#) with, or direction from, any government agency or political campaign on how Twitter should have handled the Hunter Biden laptop situation.”

Even ‘Twitter Files’ author Matt Taibbi (who testified in front of a separate committee hearing in March) could not substantiate Comer’s claims: “[there is no evidence](#) – that I’ve seen – of any government involvement in the laptop story.



**December 2022: Comer Falsely Claimed ‘Twitter Files’ Showed Evidence Of So-Called Collusion on Fox News. They Didn’t.**

Shortly after Elon Musk acquired Twitter, he hand-picked a group of right-wing journalists to release a carefully-curated cache of internal documents. After some of the documents were released, Comer took to Fox News to claim that Musk’s ‘Twitter Files’ [contained “evidence”](#) that President Biden’s campaign supposedly “colluded” with Big Tech. But the evidence wasn’t there: “The unsupported claim [...], of course, is not what the selectively released company documents show.”

**November 2022: During His First Press Conference, Comer Said He Had “Evidence of Federal Crimes.” His Report Failed To Name A Single Crime.**

During his first press conference after Republicans won a House majority in November 2022, Comer declared: “Committee Republicans have uncovered evidence of federal crimes committed by, and to the benefit of, members of the president’s family.” But when he released a 31-page interim report, reporters noted that it [lacked evidence and declined to specify charges](#): “[the report] does not make specific allegations about the Biden family or their alleged crimes. Indeed, the report stops short of listing any of the specific crimes listed by Comer...it does, however, accuse the Biden family.”

**October 2022: Fact Checkers Called Out Comer For “Need[ing] To Get His Facts Straight” On Hunter Biden Claims.**

Weeks before the 2022 midterm elections, Rep. Comer made [false and unsubstantiated claims](#) about President Biden’s family on Fox News: “Hunter Biden committed serious crimes, as you mentioned, 150 suspicious activity reports. [...] But yet the FBI did nothing about it.” Just days later, Comer got [called out by independent fact checkers](#) for lying to Americans about Hunter Biden. An investigative reporter wrote that Comer “needs to get his facts straight” after making numerous false and/or unsubstantiated claims about foreign business dealings.