

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 29, 2023

Ms. Sally A. Painter
Chief Operating Officer
Blue Star Strategies, LLC
888 17th Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. Painter:

The Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Oversight and Accountability are investigating whether sufficient grounds exist to draft articles of impeachment against President Biden for consideration by the full House. Along with House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jason Smith, the Committees set forth in a September 27, 2023, memorandum the evidence justifying the inquiry and the scope of this impeachment investigation.¹ The Committees have identified you as possessing information relevant to our investigation and seek your testimony regarding related topics. This request is made pursuant to that inquiry.

The Committees have reviewed bank records of individuals and entities associated with the Biden family as well as other evidence. This review uncovered a pattern of financial complexity. As detailed in the September 27 memorandum,² the Oversight Committee has developed a significant body of evidence consisting of financial records and testimony to suggest then-Vice President Biden's family used his position as Vice President to accumulate millions of dollars from Burisma, a Ukrainian natural gas company then implicated in a years-long corruption investigation conducted by Ukrainian authorities.³ The Vice President's son, Hunter Biden, served on Burisma's Board of Directors from April 2014 until April 2019.⁴ The evidence indicates that then-Vice President Biden took official action—at the urging of his son⁵—that had the effect of benefiting Burisma.⁶

A now-public Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) record that detailed conversations between an FBI confidential human source and Burisma executives further suggests then-Vice

¹ Memorandum from Chairmen Jim Jordan, James Comer, and Jason Smith, to Members of the H. Comm. on the Judiciary, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, and H. Comm. on Ways & Means (Sept. 27, 2023).

² *Id.* at 7.

³ *Id.* at 6-11.

⁴ Kenneth P. Vogel & Iuliia Mendel, *Biden faces conflict of interest questions that are being promoted by Trump and Allies*, N.Y. TIMES (May 1, 2019).

⁵ Transcribed Interview of Devon Archer at 34-36 (July 31, 2023).

⁶ Memorandum from Chairmen Jim Jordan, James Comer, and Jason Smith, to Members of the H. Comm. on the Judiciary, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, and H. Comm. on Ways & Means (Sept. 27, 2023).

President Biden participated in an apparent bribery scheme.⁷ According to this confidential human source, who has been described as “highly credible,”⁸ Burisma executives hired Hunter Biden to “protect us, through his dad, from all kinds of problems.”⁹ In addition, the confidential human source reported that Burisma’s founder told the source that “it cost 5 (million) to pay one Biden, and 5 (million) to [pay] another Biden.”¹⁰ The confidential human source reported that Burisma “didn’t want to pay the Bidens,” but was “pushed to pay them.”¹¹ The confidential source also indicated that Burisma’s founder suggested that it would take investigators ten years to find the records of illicit payments to Joe Biden.¹²

The information available to the Committees suggests that Blue Star Strategies was involved in the arrangement between Hunter Biden and Burisma. In October 2015, Hunter Biden and his business associate and fellow Burisma board member, Devon Archer, connected Burisma to Blue Star Strategies to conduct lobbying work on behalf of Burisma.¹³ According to contemporaneous emails, Hunter Biden was instrumental in convincing Burisma to retain Blue Star’s services.¹⁴ Emails obtained by the Ways and Means Committee reveal that the “ultimate purpose” of Burisma’s decision to retain Blue Star was “to close down . . . any cases/pursuits against [Burisma founder and owner] Nikolay [Zlochevsky] in Ukraine.”¹⁵

The Committees have learned that while conducting work on behalf of Burisma, Blue Star leveraged Hunter Biden’s name and association with Burisma to procure meetings with

⁷ See FBI Form FD-1023 re Confidential Human Source’s Meetings with Burisma Executives (June 30, 2020).

⁸ Transcribed Interview of Scott Brady, Former U.S. Att’y, W. Dist. of Penn., at 20, 103 (Oct. 23, 2023). See also Brooke Singman, *Person alleging Biden criminal bribery scheme is a ‘highly credible’ FBI source used since Obama admin: source*, FOX NEWS (June 2, 2023) (“A source familiar told Fox News Digital on Friday that the confidential human source who provided the Biden information to the FBI was a ‘pre-existing’ FBI source who has been used in multiple investigative matters separate from the Biden information. . . . The source also told Fox News Digital that the confidential human source has been ‘consistently reviewed by the FBI’ and has been ‘found to be highly credible.’”); Ryan Grim & Ken Klippenstein, *What does the FBI have on Hunter and Joe Biden?*, THE INTERCEPT (June 13, 2023) (“The confidential human source reported to the FBI — which has reportedly deemed the source to be ‘highly credible’ . . .”).

⁹ FBI Form FD-1023 re Confidential Human Source’s Meetings with Burisma Executives, at 1 (June 30, 2020).

¹⁰ *Id.* at 2.

¹¹ *Id.* (internal quotation marks omitted).

¹² See *id.* at 3.

¹³ Email from Hunter Biden to Vadym Pozharskyi, Corp. Sec’y, Burisma (Nov. 5, 2015, 2:11 PM) (Ziegler Exhibit 309).

¹⁴ See, e.g., *id.* (“Devon [Archer] and I do feel comfortable with B[lue] S[tar] and the ability of Sally [Painter] & Karen [Tramontano] to deliver. You should go ahead and sign [the retainer agreement]. Looking forward to getting started on this.”).

¹⁵ Email from Vadym Pozharskyi, Corp. Sec’y, Burisma, to Hunter Biden, Devon Archer, and Eric Schwerin (Nov. 2, 2015, 4:35 PM) (Ziegler Exhibit 309). Although Zlochevsky’s first name is Mykola, Burisma corporate secretary Vadym Pozharskyi “often referred to Zlochevsky as ‘Nikolay’ in emails to Hunter Biden.” Gabe Kaminsky, *Hunter Biden lent visa help to Burisma boss allegedly tied to ‘criminal bribery scheme’*, WASH. EXAM’R (July 14, 2023). This is likely due to the fact that Mykola and Nikolay are the Ukrainian and Russian forms, respectively, of the English name Nicholas. See *Mykola*, BEHIND THE NAME, <https://www.behindthename.com/name/mykola> (last visited Nov. 21, 2023); *Nikolay*, BEHIND THE NAME, <https://www.behindthename.com/name/nikolay> (last visited Nov. 21, 2023). See also Jessica Chasmar et al., *Republicans erupt over 2015 email exposing ‘ultimate purpose’ of Hunter’s involvement with Burisma*, FOX NEWS (July 12, 2023) (reporting that “Nikolay,” as used in this email, indeed refers to Zlochevsky).

senior State Department officials to improve Burisma's image within the State Department.¹⁶ For instance, on December 10, 2015, after then-U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt was "sharply critical of Burisma in one of his official public speeches,"¹⁷ you and Blue Star's Chief Executive Officer Karen Tramontano met with Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs Amos Hochstein to determine "the factual basis for Ambassador Pyatt's statements" regarding Burisma and whether Hochstein or the State Department "had a position about the company."¹⁸ Hochstein told you that he held a "negative" view of Burisma.¹⁹ On December 16, 2015, you and Ms. Tramontano met with Ambassador Pyatt to discuss "how he came to his position about Burisma."²⁰ Several months later, on February 24, 2016, a State Department official explained in an email that Ms. Tramontano requested a meeting with Under Secretary of State Catherine Novelli to discuss "remarks alleging Burisma . . . of corruption" and "noted that two high profile U.S. citizens are affiliated with the company (including Hunter Biden as a board member)."²¹ Ms. Tramontano ultimately met with Under Secretary Novelli on March 1, 2016, to discuss "the State Department's position regarding Burisma and how the Department came to that position."²²

In 2021, the Justice Department opened an investigation into Blue Star for potential Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) violations stemming from its work on behalf of Burisma.²³ It subsequently closed that investigation in May 2022 after Blue Star submitted a new filing detailing its lobbying work for Burisma.²⁴

For all these reasons, we believe that you possess specialized information that will meaningfully advance the impeachment inquiry.²⁵ Additionally, we believe that you possess relevant information that would assist the Committees in crafting potential legislation, including legislative reforms to FARA. The Committees also are considering crafting legislation that would strengthen reporting requirements related to certain foreign transactions involving senior

¹⁶ See generally STAFF REPORT, S. COMM. ON HOMELAND SEC. & GOVERNMENTAL AFFS. & S. COMM. ON FIN., HUNTER BIDEN, BURISMA, AND CORRUPTION: THE IMPACT ON U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY AND RELATED CONCERNS, at 42-53 (2020).

¹⁷ Letter from Karen Tramontano, Chief Exec. Officer, Blue Star Strategies, LLC, to Sens. Ron Johnson & Charles Grassley (Dec. 18, 2019).

¹⁸ Transcribed Interview of Karen Tramontano, Chief Exec. Officer, Blue Star Strategies, LLC, at 21, 71-72 (Aug. 28, 2020).

¹⁹ *Id.* at 73.

²⁰ Letter from Karen Tramontano, Chief Exec. Officer, Blue Star Strategies, LLC, to Sens. Ron Johnson & Charles Grassley (Dec. 18, 2019).

²¹ Email from [Redacted], Special Assistant, Off. of the Under Sec'y for Econ. Growth, Energy, & the Env't, U.S. Dep't of State, to [Redacted] (Feb. 24, 2016, 5:03 PM). See also Jessica Donatti, *Firm Hired by Ukraine's Burisma Tried to Use Hunter Biden as Leverage, Documents Show*, WALL ST. J. (Nov. 5, 2019).

²² Transcribed Interview of Karen Tramontano, Chief Exec. Officer, Blue Star Strategies, LLC, at 93-94 (Aug. 28, 2020).

²³ Isaac Stanley-Becker, *Lobbying shop says DOJ probe into its work for Burisma has been closed*, WASH. POST (May 17, 2022).

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ Memorandum from Chairmen Jim Jordan, James Comer, and Jason Smith, to Members of the H. Comm. on the Judiciary, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, and H. Comm. on Ways & Means (Sept. 27, 2023).

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elected officials' family members and that would implement robust financial disclosure requirements that shed light on ownership of opaque corporate entities.

Accordingly, we request you make yourself available for a transcribed interview with the Committees. If you have any questions regarding this interview, please coordinate with Judiciary Committee staff at (202) 225-6906 and with Oversight Committee staff at (202) 225-5074. Please contact the Committees as soon as possible but by no later than December 8, 2023, to schedule your interview.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary



James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

cc: The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability