



November 6, 2017

Peggy Gustafson, Inspector General
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Inspector General Gustafson,

On behalf of our more than one million members and supporters working to hold power accountable, Common Cause strongly encourages you to investigate Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross' financial ties to Russia. The just-released "Paradise Papers" detail previously undisclosed connections that Secretary Ross has with Russia and Kremlin-linked interests that he did not fully reveal during his confirmation process. We urge you to investigate his connections to Russia so all Americans can get the transparency they deserve.

Some of the critical questions that must be asked and answered include:

- Did Secretary Ross truthfully complete his committee questionnaire and fully disclose all financial ties during his confirmation process?
- Why didn't Secretary Ross disclose that he held a stake in Navigator Holdings, which has a close business relationship with a Russian firm connected to Vladimir Putin?
- Were there any previous business connections that Secretary Ross had with any U.S. adversaries?
- Has Secretary Ross started or enhanced any business relationships with foreign entities during his time as Secretary?
- Has Secretary Ross taken any actions, during his time as Secretary, on any particular matters that would have a direct and predictable effect on his financial interests in Navigator Holdings or other foreign entities?

We appreciate your prompt investigation into this matter. We strongly encourage you to publicly release the results of any investigation so that Americans can make their own conclusions about Secretary Ross's financial ties.

Sincerely,

Karen Hobert Flynn
President
Common Cause