



The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

February 10, 2017

Dear Chairman Chaffetz,

We appreciate your joint letter with Congressman Cummings to the Office of Government Ethics asking it to investigate White House Counselor Kellyanne Conway's product endorsement of a specific company. However, the Trump Administration's conflicts of interests go far beyond this one incident. Your statement at a February 9, 2017, townhall meeting that "the President, under the law, is exempt from conflicts of interest laws" is not fully accurate. President Trump's myriad conflicts of interest present an unprecedented situation in American history that could undermine his presidency and hurt the country. The financial arrangement outlined by then-President-elect Trump at a January 11 press conference falls woefully short of the independently-managed blind trust necessary to avoid conflicts and violations of the Constitution's Emoluments Clause. His complex financial dealings lead to many unanswered questions about his administration.

Common Cause and our 700,000-plus members and supporters across the country, including 520 in Utah's 3rd Congressional District, strongly encourage you to hold hearings to fully analyze the many conflicts of interest and potential Emoluments Clause violations by President Trump and his administration. Accountability must be a key tenet of any administration, and your committee can help provide transparency and accountability to restore faith and confidence in government for the American people.

We request that you hold a series of hearings that address the following questions and issues:

- The personal financial disclosure reports filed by then-candidate Trump during the campaign reveal that President Trump owns in whole or in part, and/or serves as an officer of, more than 500 businesses. However, the personal financial disclosure forms provide no additional detail regarding the finances and operations of these 500+ businesses. In order to monitor potential conflicts of interest and Emoluments Clause violations, American taxpayers require transparency in these business operations. Will you and your colleagues demand full transparency with respect to the Trump Organization and its many affiliated businesses?

- Which Trump Organization affiliated businesses currently have debt? And to whom? In which countries are those businesses located, and how could they affect U.S. policymaking toward those countries?
- Although [you called](#) on then-candidate Trump to release his tax returns in August 2016, he has refused to release these documents, as has been done by all modern American presidential candidates and presidents. How can you ensure that President Trump will release his tax returns going forward so all Americans can have an accurate picture of how his presidency affects his net worth? Will you and your colleagues call on him again to release these documents?
- Although President Trump is not legally required to file his next personal finance disclosure report until May 2018, all other modern American presidents have completed one in their first year in office. Will President Trump complete one in 2017? Will you call on him to do so?
- What are the details of the business arrangements made for President Trump's children and immediate family members regarding the Trump Organization? What happens if these arrangements are broken?
- Although President Trump said that his company, the Trump Organization, which President Trump retains ownership of, would not conduct any new business dealings overseas during his presidency, he did not make that same promise for domestic dealings. How can we ensure that the overseas pledge is kept, and are there instances in which President Trump should recuse himself from certain domestic policymaking because of Trump Organization domestic dealings?
- Should President Trump recuse himself from certain foreign policymaking decisions that would directly affect the bottom line of Trump Organization business operations in certain foreign countries?
- Due to President Trump's ownership of the Trump Organization, and the Trump Organization's business operations overseas, the President is likely in violation of the Constitution's Emoluments Clause. How can that be rectified, and if it is not, what should happen? How can we verify that President Trump will follow through on his promise to donate profits from the Trump Hotel to the U.S. Treasury, especially if he doesn't release his tax returns?

These and other critical unanswered questions about President Trump's vast financial dealings must be examined by your committee. You are quoted in a January 12, 2017, [Politico article](#) stating, "President-elect Trump's obligation is to comply with the laws on the books. It appears he is going to great lengths to be as responsible as possible and comply with those requirements." However, only public hearings – with the introduction of key documentation – can help determine if President Trump is complying with all laws. You made repeated statements throughout the summer and fall of 2016 about the need for the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to fully investigate the next president. The American public

fully expects you to keep your promise so we can ensure that the Trump administration is held to the highest ethical standards.

Sincerely,

Karen Hobert Flynn
President
Common Cause

cc: Congressman Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member