

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 17, 2025

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Mitch Behm
Acting Inspector General
Office of Inspector General, Department of
Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Attorney General Bondi and Acting Inspector General Behm:

Please find enclosed a letter to the White House regarding corruption in the Trump Administration.

One of the issues raised in the letter is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) decision to cancel a \$2.4 billion contract with Verizon to upgrade air traffic control communications, and to pay Elon Musk's Starlink to help manage U.S. airspace.¹ In this case, we are concerned that Musk — who is employed as a Special Government Employee and is therefore subject to federal conflict-of-interest rules — may be using his government role to benefit his own private company. Reports indicate that some personnel of SpaceX, Starlink's parent company, have already begun working at the FAA.² Additionally, Starlink has begun shipping its hardware to the FAA, though the company has stated that it is providing satellite kits to the agency free of charge.³ However, sources suggest that the FAA is ordering staff to “begin finding tens of millions of dollars for a Starlink deal.”⁴ Musk, who owns Starlink, would have a financial interest in a new contract between the FAA and Starlink for purposes of the primary conflict-of-interest statute applicable to federal employees, 18 U.S.C. § 208. The extent of his personal communications with the FAA or participation (if any) in the contracting matter is unclear.

¹ Washington Post, “FAA targeting Verizon contract in favor of Musk's Starlink, sources say,” Ian Duncan, Hannah Natanson, Lori Aratani, and Faiz Siddiqui, February 26, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/02/26/musk-starlink-doge-faa-verizon/>; CNN, “Musk's Starlink gets FAA contract, raising new conflict of interest concerns,” Chris Isidore, February 25, 2025, <https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/25/business/musk-faa-starlink-contract/index.html>.

² Bloomberg News, “How Elon Musk Muscled His Way Into the FAA,” Jason Leopold, Allyson Versprille, and Kelcee Griffis, March 5, 2025, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2025-03-05/after-elon-musk-lands-at-faa-his-starlink-business-stands-to-gain-business>; Washington Post, “FAA targeting Verizon contract in favor of Musk's Starlink, sources say,” Ian Duncan, Hannah Natanson, Lori Aratani, and Faiz Siddiqui, February 26, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/02/26/musk-starlink-doge-faa-verizon/>.

³ Washington Post, “SpaceX confirms Starlink work at FAA but denies bid to replace Verizon,” Lori Aratani, Ian Duncan, and Hannah Natanson, March 6, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/03/06/starlink-faa-verizon-contract-musk/>.


⁴ Rolling Stone, “FAA Officials Ordered Staff to Find Funding for Elon Musk's Starlink,” Andrew Perez, and Asawin Suebsaeng, March 2, 2025, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/elon-musk-starlink-faa-officials-find-funding-1235285246/>.

We ask that the Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General and the Department of Justice investigate the scope of Mr. Musk's activities at the FAA to determine whether, in his capacity as a special government employee in the White House, he has participated in any particular matter in which he has a financial interest, which would violate the criminal conflict-of-interest statute, 18 U.S.C. § 208. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 17, 2025

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
Government Accountability Office
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

Please find enclosed a letter to the White House regarding corruption in the Trump Administration.

One of the issues raised in the letter is the Trump Administration's firing of the Director of the Office of Government Ethics (OGE), David Huitema. OGE is now being led by acting Director Doug Collins, who simultaneously serves as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA).¹

Being the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs is not a part-time job. With over 482,000 employees² and an annual budget of \$350 billion,³ the VA has a physical presence in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands — and it has cooperative arrangements for serving veterans overseas.⁴ Each year, the Veterans Health Administration within the VA delivers medical services to over 9 million veterans,⁵ providing over 118 million clinical appointments each year.⁶

Simultaneously, as acting OGE Director, Collins now also oversees reviewing the financial disclosure statements of about a thousand presidential nominees, identifying their potential conflicts of interest, and negotiating ethics agreements to remedy those conflicts — as well as advising every agency in the executive branch, including the VA, on compliance with federal

¹ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Douglas A. Collins, <https://department.va.gov/staff-biographies/douglas-a-collins/>.

² New York Times, “Veterans Affairs Department Plans to Eliminate More Than 80,000 Workers,” Chris Cameron and Nicholas Nehamas, March 5, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/05/us/politics/veterans-affairs-cuts-trump.html>.

³ Military Times, “Vets are speaking out on Trump administration's plans to cut VA budget,” Ben Finley and Stephen Groves, March 5, 2025, <https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2025/03/06/vets-are-speaking-out-on-trump-administrations-plans-to-cut-va-budget/>.

⁴ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, “Locations,” last visited March 11, 2025, <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp>.

⁵ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, “About the Department,” <https://department.va.gov/about/#:~:text=VA's%20Veterans%20Health%20Administration%20is,million%20enrolled%20Veterans%20each%20year>.

⁶ Department of Veterans Affairs, “FY 2025 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST” (slide deck), page 5, March 11, 2024, <https://www.va.gov/opa/docs/remediation-required/management/fy2025-va-budget-rollout-briefing.pdf>.

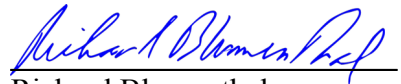
ethics laws. OGE oversees a program comprising 4,500 agency ethics officials,⁷ 39,000 public financial disclosure reports annually,⁸ 420,000 confidential financial disclosure reports annually,⁹ and regulations covering over 2 million federal civilian employees.¹⁰

We ask that the Government Accountability Office investigate whether, given Collins’s competing responsibilities, his dual appointment is undermining the work of the VA or OGE. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

⁷ U.S. Office of Government Ethics, “Agency Profile,” last visited March 11, 2025, p. 7, [https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/0/759FFDB155C78B70852585B6005A189C/\\$FILE/OGE%20Agency%20Profile%20Book%20Spread%20View.pdf](https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/0/759FFDB155C78B70852585B6005A189C/$FILE/OGE%20Agency%20Profile%20Book%20Spread%20View.pdf).

⁸ U.S. Office of Government Ethics, “Annual Performance Report FY 2024,” page 6, [https://oge.gov/web/OGE.nsf/0/B312E85F4A3A3CC385258C130048F371/\\$FILE/US%20Office%20of%20Government%20Ethics%202024%20APR%20\(Publication\).pdf](https://oge.gov/web/OGE.nsf/0/B312E85F4A3A3CC385258C130048F371/$FILE/US%20Office%20of%20Government%20Ethics%202024%20APR%20(Publication).pdf).

⁹ Government Accountability Office, “Financial Disclosure: Updates Are Needed to the Public Reporting Requirements,” GAO-25-107039, December 10, 2024, p. 1, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-25-107039.pdf>.

¹⁰ 5 C.F.R. part 2635; National Public Radio, “Trump wants to cut the federal workforce. Who they are and what that means,” Scott Neuman, January 31, 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/31/nx-s1-5280417/federal-workers-workforce-facts-cuts>.