

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 2051

October 19, 2022

Co-Chairman Vinovich
Office of Congressional Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
425 3rd Street, SW, Suite 1110
Washington, DC 20024

Co-Chairman Barnes
Office of Congressional Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
425 3rd Street, SW, Suite 1110
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Co-Chairmen Vinovich and Barnes

As the Ranking Members of the three House Committees with broad oversight responsibilities over House Rules and the Office of Congressional Ethics, we are concerned about recent reports of potentially criminal activity by your Staff Director and Chief Counsel Mr. Omar Ashmawy. The mission of the Office of Congressional Ethics and its Board is to assist the House in upholding high standards of ethical conduct for its Members, officers and staff. We believe that same spirit must also be applied internally to the agency you govern.

On October 13, 2022, Yahoo News reported that Mr. Ashmawy was arrested and charged with driving under the influence and three other violations related to a September 10, 2022, incident in Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, this is not the first concerning incident involving Mr. Ashmawy during his tenure with the Office of Congressional Ethics. In 2015, multiple witness statements to police detailed Mr. Ashmawy's drunken and harassing behavior towards women during an altercation in which two people pled guilty to charges and Mr. Ashmawy was sued and settled out of court. The allegations surrounding his alleged abuse of power and attempts to influence law enforcement are exceptionally worrisome. This is an unacceptable pattern of behavior and raises several important questions that must be answered:

- What were the detailed results of the investigation led by an independent counsel related to the 2015 incident?
- What actions were taken by the Board following the independent counsel's investigation?
- Have there been additional allegations of abuse of power or misuse of official resources made against Mr. Ashmawy before or since the 2015 incident?
- What information will the Board share regarding settlement of the Martucci lawsuit against Mr. Ashmawy?
- Is the Board aware of any other federal, state, or local agency (including the Committee on Ethics, the Office of the Inspector General, or law enforcement) investigation of alleged criminal or unethical actions by Mr. Ashmawy? If so, what were the detailed results of the investigation?
- When were you made aware of the September 10, 2022, arrest?

- What actions have been taken by the Board since being made aware of the September 10, 2022, arrest?
- When were those actions taken?
- Is Mr. Ashmawy still receiving compensation?
- Does Mr. Ashmawy still have access to data collected and controlled by the office?
- What is the Board's plan for Mr. Ashmawy's position moving forward?
- Is the Board aware of any other allegations of criminal or unethical actions by Office of Congressional Ethics staff?

We appreciate your timely attention to this important matter and request that responses to the above questions are provided by close of business on October 24, 2022.

Sincerely,



Rodney Davis
Ranking Member
Committee on House Administration



Michael Guest
Ranking Member
Committee on Ethics



Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Committee on Rules