

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
<https://oversight.house.gov>

September 12, 2023

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is investigating President Biden's connections to certain international and domestic business transactions and practices, including his family and associates peddling influence to generate millions of dollars for the Biden family.¹ The Committee seeks information from the U.S. Department of State (State Department or Department) to provide context for certain sudden foreign policy changes that occurred while Joe Biden was Vice President, particularly regarding Ukraine while then-Vice President Biden's son served on the board of directors of a company being investigated for corruption. The Committee requests information from the State Department regarding then-Vice President's actions and decisions relating to Ukraine.

The Committee is investigating then-Vice President Biden's and the Obama-Biden Administration's official actions and policies regarding Ukraine. Specifically, the Committee seeks information regarding the State Department's perception of the Ukrainian Office of the Prosecutor General, at the time headed by Viktor Shokin. Prosecutor General Shokin assumed his position on February 10, 2015.² Shokin was elevated to lead the Office of the Prosecutor General in the midst of an ongoing, international investigation focused on corruption surrounding Burisma—a natural gas company in Ukraine—and its founder, Mykola

¹ Memorandum (Mar. 16, 2023), H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability. From Maj. Comm. staff to Comm. Members. Re: New Evidence Resulting from the Oversight Committee's Investigation into the Biden Family's Influence Peddling and Business Schemes; Memorandum (May. 10, 2023), H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability. From Maj. Comm. staff to Comm. Members. Re: Second Bank Records Memorandum from the Oversight Committee's Investigation into the Biden Family's Influence Peddling and Business Schemes; Memorandum (Aug. 9, 2023), H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability. From Maj. Comm. staff to Comm. Members. Re: Third Bank Records Memorandum from the Oversight Committee's Investigation into the Biden Family's Influence Peddling and Business Schemes.

² Oleg Sukhov, *Political survivor Shokin takes over general prosecutor office*; KYIV POST (Feb. 10, 2015).

Zlochevsky.³ In March 2014, a French bank reported Zlochevsky to “U.K. authorities on suspicion of money laundering after his companies tried to move \$23 million to Cyprus from their British account at the bank”⁴ Hunter Biden joined Burisma in April 2014 and was paid approximately one million dollars per year.⁵

The Committee seeks to understand the State Department’s sudden change in disposition towards the Ukrainian Office of the Prosecutor General in late 2015. On June 11, 2015, then-Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland wrote Prosecutor General Shokin, applauding his office’s progress in anti-corruption efforts.⁶ In September 2015, then-U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt publicly stated “we want to work with Prosecutor General Shokin so the [Prosecutor General Office] is leading the fight against corruption.”⁷ Also in September, the Interagency Policy Committee asserted Prosecutor General Shokin had made sufficient progress in combating corruption to warrant a third guarantee of a \$1 billion loan.⁸ On November 5, 2015, then-Vice President participated in a call with then-President of Ukraine Poroshenko and provided no indication that the United States’ policy regarding Ukraine required the dismissal of Prosecutor General Shokin.⁹ By late 2015, however, the removal of Prosecutor General Shokin became a condition of the loan guarantee by the United States.¹⁰ In March 2016, Shokin was dismissed from his position by the Ukrainian Rada after months of public pressure most adamantly applied by then-Vice President Biden.¹¹

The timing of these events is notable to the Committee. During the Committee’s transcribed interview with Devon Archer—a longtime Biden family associate—Archer explained that by late 2015, Vadym Pozharsky, Burisma’s corporate secretary, was increasingly pushing Hunter Biden to deliver help from the U.S. government regarding pressure Zlochevsky was facing from the Office of the Prosecutor General and abroad.¹² Archer testified that on

³ *Factbox: Burisma, the obscure Ukrainian gas company the heart of U.S. political row*, REUTERS (Sep. 24, 2019).

⁴ Paul Sonne & Laura Mills, *Ukrainians See Conflict in Biden’s Anticorruption Message*, WALL ST. J. (Dec. 7, 2015).

⁵ Memorandum (Aug. 9, 2023), H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability. From Maj. Comm. staff to Comm. Members. Re: Third Bank Records Memorandum from the Oversight Committee’s Investigation into the Biden Family’s Influence Peddling and Business Schemes, p. 13.

⁶ Letter from Victoria Nuland, Asst. Sec. of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S., to Viktor Shokin, Pros. Gen. of Ukraine (June 11, 2015).

⁷ *See*, JusticeSecurity.Org, Remarks by US Ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt at the Odesa Financial Forum on September 24, 2015, JusticeSecurity.Org, <https://www.justsecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Remarks-by-US-Ambassador-Geoffrey-Pyatt-at-the-Odesa-Financial-Forum-on-September-24-2015-ukraine.pdf> (last accessed Aug. 29, 2023).

⁸ John Solomon, *New memos undercut Biden-Ukraine narrative Democrats sold during 2019 impeachment scandal*, JUST THE NEWS, (Aug. 21, 2023).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Oleg Sukhov, *UPDATE: Parliament sacks Prosecutor General Shokin*, KYIV POST (March 29, 2016).

¹² *See*, Transcript of Devon Archer, H. Comm. on Oversight and Accountability, at 34-35.

December 4, 2015, Hunter Biden “called D.C.” in a private meeting with Zlochevsky and Pozharsky in Dubai following Pozharsky’s request.¹³ The Committee is investigating the nature of this call and the circumstances that surrounded it, including at the State Department.

The Committee seeks information surrounding these events in Ukraine. To further our investigation, please provide these documents no later than September 26, 2023:

1. All documents and communications—including transcripts and notes (handwritten or otherwise)—made in the course of phone calls between then-Vice President Biden and Ukrainian officials from January 1, 2014, and December 31, 2016;
2. All documents and communications between any State Department employee and Blue Star Strategies, LLC from September 1, 2014, and December 31, 2016, regarding Ukraine or Burisma;
3. All documents and communications to or from John Kerry, Victoria Nuland, Amos Hochstein, Geoffrey Pyatt, Wendy Sherman, Thomas Shannon, and Alfonso Lenhardt referencing Burisma, Zlochevsky, Pozharsky, Shokin, Ukraine’s Office of the Prosecutor General, Eric Schwerin, Devon Archer, or Hunter Biden between January 1, 2014, and January 20, 2017;
4. All documents and communications between the State Department and the Executive Office of the President (including but not limited to the Office of the Vice President) referencing Burisma, Zlochevsky, Pozharsky, Shokin, Ukraine’s Office of the Prosecutor General, Eric Schwerin, Devon Archer, or Hunter Biden between January 1, 2015, and January 20, 2017;
5. All internal documents and communications relating to any conditions placed on the \$1 billion loan guarantee described above; and
6. All documents and communications between or among the State Department, the White House, and the U.S. Embassy for Ukraine relating to the conditions on the \$1 billion loan guarantee described above.

To schedule the delivery of responsive documents or if you have questions regarding this request, please contact Committee on Oversight and Accountability staff at (202) 225-5074.

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X.

¹³ *Id.* at 37.

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Thank you for your prompt attention to this important investigation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "J" and "C".

James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

cc: The Honorable Jamie B. Raskin, Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability