

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

May 14, 2025

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

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

On May 11, President Trump confirmed reports that his Administration is in the process of receiving a luxury jet worth approximately \$400 million from the royal family of Qatar for temporary use as Air Force One, before the jet would be permanently gifted to the Trump Presidential Library Foundation, potentially for President Trump's continued use after his term ends.¹ Moreover, President Trump confirmed reports of this gift mere weeks after his family reached a deal for a Trump-branded luxury golf resort in Qatar as part of a \$5.5 billion project that will be built in partnership with a Qatari state-owned developer.²

As reported, this gift clearly violates the Constitution and the statutory regime enacted by Congress to govern such gifts.³ The Constitution unequivocally bestows on Congress the power to control whether any officer of the United States, including the President, may accept a gift "from any King, Prince, or foreign State."⁴

Public reporting indicates that you provided a legal memorandum to the White House Counsel's Office (WHCO) concluding that it would be "legally permissible" for this luxury jet to be gifted to the U.S. Department of Defense prior to ownership being transferred to the Trump Presidential Library Foundation.⁵

However, there are serious questions about whether you should have recused yourself from this matter. During your confirmation process, you did not list the State of Qatar as a

¹ See @RapidResponse47, X (May 11, 2025, 8:47 PM), <https://x.com/rapidresponse47/status/1921728995827093567>; see also Karen DeYoung, Natalie Allison & Mariana Alfaro, *Trump Administration in Talks with Qatar Over Plane Gift*, WASH. POST (May 12, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/05/11/trump-air-force-one-qatar/>; Charlie Savage, *Trump's Plan to Accept Luxury Jet from Qatar Strains Bounds of Propriety*, N.Y. TIMES (May 12, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/12/us/trump-qatar-jet-plane.html>.

² See Bernard Condon, *Trump Company Strikes Qatari Golf Resort Deal in a Sign It's Not Holding Back from Foreign Business*, AP (April 30, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/trump-qatar-deal-conflicts-saudi-arabia-embolments-7379bee2e307d39bd43b534a05ae3207>; Gabe Whisnant, *New Trump Golf Course, \$5.5 Billion Beachside Project Announced for Qatar*, NEWSWEEK (April 30, 2025), <https://www.newsweek.com/new-trump-golf-course-55-billion-beachside-project-announced-qatar-2066482>.

³ See 5 U.S.C. § 7432; 41 C.F.R. §§ 102-42.10, 102-42.15, 102-42.70.

⁴ U.S. Const. art. 1, § 9, cl. 8.

⁵ Jonathan Karl & Katherine Faulders, *Trump Administration Poised to Accept 'Palace in the Sky' as a Gift for Trump from Qatar: Sources*, ABC NEWS (May 11, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-administration-poised-accept-palace-sky-gift-trump/story?id=121680511>.

conflict of interest on your Senate Judiciary Questionnaire, despite serving as a lobbyist for this foreign government prior to your confirmation as Attorney General.⁶ When I asked you about this during your confirmation hearing, you refused to commit to recusing yourself from matters involving Qatar, but you did commit to “consult with the career ethics officials within the Department [of Justice] and make the appropriate decision.”⁷ However, the Department has removed senior career ethics officials and put their duties in the hands of two inexperienced political appointees who are beholden to you for their positions.⁸ I wrote to you about this outrageous move three months ago and you have yet to respond.⁹

In light of the possibility that the Trump Administration may accept this unprecedented, extraordinary gift from the royal family of Qatar in violation of the Constitution and statutory foreign gift prohibitions enacted by Congress, I ask that you provide the following information and materials no later than May 28, 2025.

1. The memorandum you produced to WHCO concluding that the acceptance of this gift is “legally permissible.”
2. The names and titles of the Department ethics officials with whom you consulted on your potential conflict of interest in this matter and any records or materials related to this consultation.

I look forward to your full and immediate compliance with these requests. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary

⁶ See Senate Committee on the Judiciary Questionnaire for Pamela J. Bondi at 24-26.

⁷ The Nomination of the Honorable Pamela Jo Bondi to be Attorney General of the United States: Hearing before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary (Jan. 15, 2025); and see Senate Committee on the Judiciary Questionnaire for Pamela J. Bondi at 26.

⁸ See Ben Penn, *Trump DOJ Assigns Sensitive Ethics Power to Political Aids*, BLOOMBERG L. (Feb. 16, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/trump-doj-delegates-sensitive-ethics-powers-to-political-aides>; Sarah N. Lynch, *US Justice Department Senior Career Ethics Officials Removed from Post, source says*, REUTERS (Jan. 27, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-justice-department-senior-career-ethics-official-removed-post-source-says-2025-01-27>.

⁹ Letter from the Honorable Richard J. Durbin and Nine Other Members, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, to the Honorable Pam Bondi, Attorney General, Dep’t of Justice (Feb. 20, 2025).