

United States Senate

September 21, 2026

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

Trust in our government institutions continues to fall to near historic lows. According to the Partnership for Public Service, only 27% of Americans have trust in the federal government, while 72% say it is "corrupt."¹ There are many reasons for this, but an important one is the perception that those with close proximity to political power are provided with opportunities, access, and treatment unavailable to ordinary Americans.

That concern should not depend on which party controls the White House.

For years, serious questions have been raised about members of presidential families using their names and proximity to the President to advance private business interests. The son of former President Joe Biden, Hunter Biden, conducted substantial business with foreign entities, including interests in China and Ukraine, while his father held or sought public office.² Congressional testimony has produced conflicting accounts about the extent to which his father's name, presence, or political stature played a role in those relationships.³ Hunter Biden has denied involving his father in his business dealings, but there is little question that President Biden's decades in public office gave his son a degree of access, name recognition, and influence that

¹ Partnership for Public Service, "The State of Public Trust in Government 2026," September 16, 2026, <https://ourpublicservice.org/know-the-facts/resource-library/reports/state-of-trust-2026>.

² U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and Committee on Finance, Hunter Biden, Burisma, and Corruption: The Impact on U.S. Government Policy and Related Concerns, Majority Staff Report, 116th Cong., 2nd sess., September 23, 2020, <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/library/files/hsgac-finance-report/>.

³ U.S. House, Committee on Oversight and Accountability, "Comer Releases Devon Archer's Transcribed Interview Transcript," August 3, 2023, <https://oversight.house.gov/release/comer-releases-devon-archers-transcribed-interview-transcript/>.

materially enhanced his value in business dealings and opened doors that otherwise may have remained closed.⁴

More recently, questions have arisen about the relationships of President Trump's eldest son, Donald Trump Jr., with foreign business figures and the acceptance of significant gifts. These include a lavish wedding afterparty, on a private island, provided by Russian oligarch Umar Kremlev, who reportedly traveled to China as part of a delegation accompanying Vladimir Putin shortly before giving the gift.⁵

These concerns are compounded by Donald Trump Jr.'s active promotion of family-backed cryptocurrency ventures,⁶ his continued pursuit of international real estate deals involving direct meetings with foreign heads of state, and his reported investments in defense contracting.⁷ This pattern extends to his significant financial and advisory ties to prediction-market platforms⁸ that depend on favorable federal regulatory decisions being considered by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

These reports raise legitimate questions about foreign access to members of a sitting president's family and whether such relationships can create actual or perceived expectations of favorable treatment. They also may create expectations of a returned favor that would not be in the best interests of the American people or our allies, and could even create national security vulnerabilities.⁹

⁴ U.S. House, Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Deposition of Robert Hunter Biden, 118th Cong., 2nd sess., February 28, 2024, https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Hunter-Biden-Transcript_Redacted.pdf.

⁵ Pjotr Sauer, "Who is Umar Kremlev, the Russian oligarch who reportedly helped pay for Donald Trump Jr's wedding?," The Guardian, September 15, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/sep/15/who-is-umar-kremlev-russian-oligarch-donald-trump-jr>.

⁶ Tom Wilson et al., "How Trump Family Took Over Crypto Firm It Raised Hundreds Millions," Reuters, March 31, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/how-trump-family-took-over-crypto-firm-it-raised-hundreds-millions-2025-03-31/>.

⁷ Bernard Condon, "How the Trump Family's Business Deals Could Open the Door for Future Presidents to Profit from Office," PBS NewsHour, April 13, 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/how-the-trump-familys-business-deals-could-open-the-door-for-future-presidents-to-profit-from-office>.

⁸ Ken Sweet, "Trump Administration Backs Kalshi, Polymarket as States Move to Ban Prediction Markets," AP News, February 17, 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/kalshi-polymarket-cftc-selig-prediction-gambling-cf1fa23f126a77400a363ba920afcbbf>.

⁹ U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission, "CFTC Reaffirms Exclusive Jurisdiction over Prediction Markets in U.S. Circuit Court Filing," press release no. 9183-26, February 17, 2026, <https://www.cftc.gov/PressRoom/PressReleases/9183-26>.

The country should not have to accept one standard for the family of a Republican president and another for the family of a Democratic president. Nor should congressional oversight begin and end when control of the White House changes hands.

I therefore respectfully request that the Senate Judiciary Committee launch an investigation into the use of presidential family relationships for private financial benefit, preferential treatment, or access by domestic and foreign interests. As part of that investigation, I urge the Committee to subpoena Donald Trump Jr. and Hunter Biden to testify regarding their past business dealings, relationships with foreign individuals and entities, gifts, or other benefits they have received, and any instances in which their relationship to the President was invoked or understood to provide value.

The purpose of such an inquiry should be straightforward: establish the facts, determine whether existing ethics, disclosure, or anti-corruption laws apply, and identify reforms necessary to prevent the presidency from becoming a vehicle for private enrichment by those closest to it.

Americans deserve confidence that public institutions serve them—not presidents, political parties, wealthy interests, or members of powerful families. Congress has an obligation to pursue credible concerns wherever they lead and without regard to party.

I appreciate your longstanding commitment to congressional oversight and respectfully ask the Committee to use its authorities to examine these matters thoroughly and transparently.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. L.", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John Curtis
United States Senator