

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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January 15, 2019

The Honorable Jim Jordan  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Jordan:

Congratulations on your selection to be Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform. I look forward to working with you and all of our colleagues in the 116th Congress, and I hope we can meet in the near future to continue discussing issues that we both agree are high priorities for the American people.

Thank you for your letter on January 11. Having served for the last eight years as the Ranking Member of the Committee, I am sensitive to the concerns of the Minority, and I will consider the proposals you have made.

However, I would like to clarify several facts. First, you and some other Republican Members have criticized the Committee's decision to call Michael Cohen to testify. For example, Rep. Mark Meadows stated: "Right out of the bat, the very first witness they want to call is Michael Cohen, because they think it supports their narrative."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the press release you issued just before you sent your letter asserted that this step "makes clear that Chairman Cummings and the Democrats will do whatever it takes to attack this President."<sup>2</sup>

To be clear, Mr. Cohen will not be the Committee's first witness. As I made clear in my announcement last week, the Committee's first hearing will focus on the skyrocketing prices of prescription drugs, an issue that affects nearly every American family. As part of this investigation, I sent letters to 12 pharmaceutical companies seeking a wide range of documents relating to why they are increasing their prices so dramatically, what they are doing with the proceeds, and how we can take steps to lower drug prices for the people of this nation.

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<sup>1</sup> *Michael Cohen to Testify Before House Panel in Early February*, Washington Post (Jan. 10, 2019) (online at [www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/michael-cohen-to-testify-publicly-before-house-panel-in-early-february/2019/01/10/6c0448f4-1516-11e9-90a8-136fa44b80ba\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/michael-cohen-to-testify-publicly-before-house-panel-in-early-february/2019/01/10/6c0448f4-1516-11e9-90a8-136fa44b80ba_story.html)).

<sup>2</sup> Ranking Member Jim Jordan, Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Statement on Upcoming Hearing with Michael Cohen* (Jan. 10, 2019) (online at <https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/release/ranking-member-jordan-statement-on-upcoming-hearing-with-michael-cohen/>).

In fact, Mr. Cohen will not even be among the Committee's second set of witnesses. As my announcement made clear, the Committee's next hearing will be on H.R. 1, comprehensive legislation that will reform government ethics, improve transparency, and help strengthen our democracy. We hope to mark-up this bill soon after our hearing so that we can send it to the House floor. I hope you will lend your support to these laudable goals.

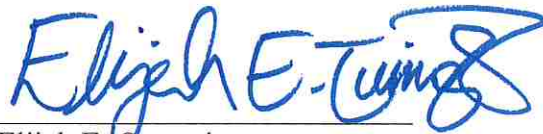
The crux of the concern from you and your colleagues seems to be that holding a hearing with Mr. Cohen now is somehow partisan. However, as I am sure you are aware, Senator Richard Burr, the Republican Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, also expressed his interest in having Mr. Cohen testify.<sup>3</sup> There is bipartisan interest in hearing directly from Mr. Cohen, and if you join with me, it can be done without inappropriately interfering with any ongoing investigation.

In terms of your specific proposal to request documents before the hearing, I have already provided you with copies of two letters that I sent to the White House and the Trump Organization seeking documents relating to the topics of the hearing. These letters renewed previous requests from four months ago that were ignored. I hope that we can now obtain full compliance.

With respect to your other suggestions for how the Committee should conduct its work, I appreciate your input. For the past eight years, three different Republican Chairmen have run the Committee, and they did so as they saw fit. I do not intend to copy their approach, but I do intend to use my best judgment as we go forward.

I know that you may not always agree with my decisions, but I sincerely hope that you will respect my right to make them now that I am Chairman. Thank you again, and I look forward to working with you in the days ahead.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings  
Chairman

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<sup>3</sup> Senator Richard Burr, *Statement on Testimony on Michael Cohen Guilty Plea* (Nov. 29, 2018) (online at [www.burr.senate.gov/press/releases/burr-statement-on-michael-cohen-guilty-plea](http://www.burr.senate.gov/press/releases/burr-statement-on-michael-cohen-guilty-plea)).