

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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November 16, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Chief of Staff
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear General Kelly:

On September 26, 2017, Ranking Member Elijah Cummings and I wrote to you as part of a government-wide survey requesting information regarding the extent to which non-career and non-elected officials in the executive branch either used government-owned aircraft for personal travel or private non-commercial aircraft for official travel.¹ Specifically, we requested information from you regarding these usages by non-elected officials in the Executive Office of the President (EOP) since January 20, 2017.

On October 10, 2017, White House Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Short responded to the Committee's request. He did not provide any of the requested records, and wrote:

[n]ot all components within the EOP are under the supervision of the President's Chief of Staff. As such, the heads of those components are in the best position to respond to requests from your Committee concerning legal compliance.²

On October 17, 2017, Ranking Member Cummings and I wrote to you again requesting similar information from between January 1, 2016, to January 19, 2017.³ On November 3, 2017, Short responded, again providing no request records and instead directing our inquiry to the National Archives and Records Administration.⁴

¹ Letter from Hon. Trey Gowdy, Chairman, and Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov't Reform, to Gen. John Kelly, Chief of Staff, The White House (Sept. 26, 2017).

² Letter from Marc T. Short, Director of Legis. Affairs, The White House, to Hon. Trey Gowdy, Chairman, and Hon. Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov't Reform (Oct. 10, 2017).

³ Letter from Hon. Trey Gowdy, Chairman, and Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov't Reform, to Gen. John Kelly, Chief of Staff, The White House (Oct. 17, 2017).


⁴ Letter from Marc T. Short, Director of Legis. Affairs, The White House, to Hon. Trey Gowdy, Chairman, and Hon. Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov't Reform (Nov. 3, 2017).

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The official White House website has a page dedicated to the Executive Office of the President. The webpage notes the EOP is “[o]verseen by the White House Chief of Staff” and the EOP “has traditionally been home to many of the President’s closest advisors.”⁵ The page then lists twelve different components under the Executive Office of the President, including the: 1) White House Office; 2) Office of the Vice President; 3) National Security Council; 4) Office of Management and Budget; 5) Council of Economic Advisers; 6) Office of the United States Trade Representative; and 7) Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The information supplied by Mr. Short in the October 10 letter is at odds with the official website. I am writing to seek your assistance with the information we requested in the September 26, 2017 letter. Assuming *arguendo* the information on your website is incorrect—EOP components do not fall under your authority—I trust you can nevertheless facilitate their response to the Committee’s request.

Thank you for providing this information no later than 5:00 p.m. on November 30, 2017.

Sincerely,

Trey Gowdy

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings

⁵ See Executive Office of the President, *available at* <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop> (last visited Nov. 13, 2017).