

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

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

January 18, 2023

Ms. Mary Elizabeth Magill  
President  
University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Ms. Magill:

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is investigating President Biden's possible illegal handling of sensitive, highly classified documents. Recent reports reveal President Biden's attorneys discovered Obama-Biden Administration documents in an unsecure closet at the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement (Penn Biden Center)—a Washington, D.C.-based think tank affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn).<sup>1</sup> Additional classified documents were discovered in the President's Delaware garage and home.<sup>2</sup> President Biden's pattern of mishandling classified documents is alarming. The Committee is concerned about who had access to these documents given the Biden family's financial connections to foreign actors and companies. The Committee requests documents and information related to foreign influence at UPenn and the Penn Biden Center.

The Committee has learned UPenn received tens of millions of dollars from anonymous Chinese sources, with a marked uptick in donations when then-former Vice President Biden was announced as leading the Penn Biden Center initiative.<sup>3</sup> UPenn publicized the formation of the Penn Biden Center on February 1, 2017.<sup>4</sup> After that announcement, UPenn's donations originating from China more than tripled.<sup>5</sup> Not only were these donations made while President Biden explored a potential run for president and launched his campaign, but also as his family and associates pursued lucrative financial projects with partners in China.<sup>6</sup> The American people deserve to know whether the Chinese Communist Party, through Chinese companies, influenced

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<sup>1</sup> Adriana Diaz, Andres Triay & Arden Farhi, *U.S. attorney reviewing documents marked classified from Joe Biden's vice presidency found at Biden think tank*, CBS (Jan. 10, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Charlie Savage, *Second Set of Classified Documents Were Found at Biden's Wilmington Home, White House Says*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 12, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> See letter from Hon. James Comer, Ranking member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, to Dr. Amy Gutmann, President, University of Pennsylvania (Jan. 27, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> *Vice President Joe Biden to lead the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement*, PENNTODAY (Feb. 1, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> *Supra*, n. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Adam Entous, Michael S. Schmidt & Katie Benner, *Hunter Biden's Tangled Tale Comes Front and Center*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 11, 2023).

potential Biden Administration policies with large, anonymous donations to UPenn and the Penn Biden Center.

Additionally, the Penn Biden Center appears to have acted as a foreign-sponsored source of income for much of a Biden Administration in-waiting. Between 2017 and 2019, UPenn paid President Biden more than \$900,000,<sup>7</sup> and the university employed at least 10 people at the Penn Biden Center who later became senior Biden administration officials—including Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl.<sup>8</sup> Financial disclosures filed with the Office of Government Ethics reveal UPenn paid these Biden associates between \$79,000 and \$208,000.<sup>9</sup> Following President Biden’s 2020 election victory, he selected the UPenn president, Amy Gutmann, and the chairman of UPenn’s board of trustees, David Cohen, to be ambassadors of Germany and Canada, respectively.<sup>10</sup> The former managing director of the Penn Biden Center, Dr. Michael Carpenter, now serves as ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.<sup>11</sup> In the Obama-Biden Administration, Dr. Carpenter had responsibility over Russia and Ukraine while serving at the Department of Defense.<sup>12</sup> The Committee is concerned top UPenn officials offered lucrative, foreign-funded salaries to President Biden’s closest political allies to secure senior posts in a future Biden Administration and foreign actors funded those salaries to influence a future government.

Contrary to what he has told the American people, while Vice President and during his tenure at the Penn Biden Center, President Biden met with his family’s international business partners. Robert Hunter Biden, the President’s son, may have had access to the classified documents found at the President’s Delaware home since he listed it as his home address as recently as 2018 and planned to share office space with an individual affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party.<sup>13</sup> This level of access and opportunity raises questions about who had access to the classified documents found at the Penn Biden Center. Reports indicate these materials included “top-secret files with the ‘sensitive compartmented information’ designation” that is used “for highly sensitive information obtained from intelligence sources.”<sup>14</sup> It is imperative to understand whether any Biden family members or associates gained access to the classified documents while stored at the Penn Biden Center.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Tamari, *Penn has paid Joe Biden more than \$900K since he left the White House. What did he do to earn the money?*, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER (Jul. 12, 2019).

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Catenacci, *Several top White House officials worked for Biden at his think tank where classified docs discovered*, FOX NEWS (Jan. 11, 2023).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Ambassador Michael R. Carpenter, U.S. Mission to the OSCE, *available at* <https://osce.usmission.gov/our-relationship/our-ambassador/>.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Carpenter, Former Nonresident Senior Fellow – Eurasia Center, Atlantic Council, *available at* <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/expert/michael-carpenter/>.

<sup>13</sup> Email on file with the Comm. Email from R. Hunter Biden (Sep. 21, 2017) (“please have keys made available for new office mates: Joe Biden [and] Gongwen Dong (Chairman Ye CEFC emissary)”).

<sup>14</sup> Jamie Gangel, *Classified documents from Biden’s time as VP discovered in private office*, CNN.COM (Jan. 9, 2023).

<sup>15</sup> Jamie Gangel, Marshall Cohen, Evan Perez & Paula Reid, *US intelligence materials related to Ukraine, Iran and UK found in Biden’s private office, source tells CNN*, CNN.COM (Jan. 10, 2023).

To assist the Committee in investigating President Biden’s recent mishandling of classified information, please provide the following documents and information no later than February 1, 2023:

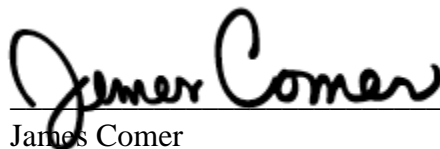
1. All documents and communications related to donations originating from China to UPenn and/or the Penn Biden Center from January 20, 2017 to present;
2. A list of all Chinese donors—and the individual amount donated—to UPenn and/or the Penn Biden Center from January 20, 2017 to present;
3. All documents and communications related to soliciting donations for the Penn Biden Center;
4. A list of all employees of the Penn Biden Center—including information about their salary, job description, and dates of employment;
5. A list of all individuals with keycard access to the Penn Biden Center—including but not limited to members of President Biden’s family;
6. A visitor log of all individuals who met with President Biden at the Penn Biden Center; and
7. All documents and communications related to security at the Penn Biden Center.

To schedule delivery of responsive documents or ask any follow-up questions, 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.

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 and is positioned above a horizontal line.

James Comer  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

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