

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 1, 2024

Mr. Edward Siskel  
Assistant to the President and White House Counsel  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Siskel:

After President Biden referred to an enormous swath of the country as “floating . . . garbage” and the White House released a transcript of President Biden’s remarks that appeared to alter this offensive comment,<sup>1</sup> we demanded the White House retain and preserve information relevant to this incident and issue a corrected transcript of President Biden’s remarks.<sup>2</sup> To date, the White House has not issued a corrected transcript, and the false transcript remains on the White House webpage.<sup>3</sup>

The White House cannot simply rewrite President Biden’s rhetoric. In this case, it appears the White House is doing so to safeguard Vice President Harris’s presidential campaign. Recent reporting has since revealed “White House press officials altered the official transcript.”<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, White House stenographers already submitted an accurate version—a version different than the White House publicly released—to the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).<sup>5</sup> The reporting also noted that a government official called the actions of the White House “a breach of protocol and spoliation of transcript integrity between the Stenography and Press Offices.”<sup>6</sup> Most notably, the report reveals the change in protocol came after the White House Press Office “conferred with the President.”<sup>7</sup> That President Biden himself may have interfered to break protocol to hide his outrageous remarks is unprecedented.

We are concerned with the latest reporting of the White House’s apparent political decision to protect the Biden-Harris Administration, instead of following longstanding and proper protocols. The report explains the standard transcript process:

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<sup>1</sup> Alex Thompson, *Biden sets off election firestorm with “garbage” comment*, Axios (Oct. 29, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Hon. Elise Stefanik, Chairwoman, House Republican Conference, Hon. James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, to Edward Siskel, Assistant to the President and White House Counsel, White House (Oct. 30, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> Remarks by President Biden on a Call with Voto Latino, White House Briefing Room (Oct. 29, 2024), *available at* <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2024/10/29/remarks-by-president-biden-on-a-campaign-call/>.

<sup>4</sup> Aamer Madhani and Zeke Miller, *AP sources: White House altered record of Biden’s ‘garbage’ remarks despite stenographer concerns*, AP News (Oct. 31, 2024).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

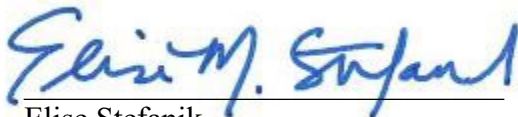
“If there is a difference in interpretation, the Press Office may choose to withhold the transcript but cannot edit it independently,” the supervisor wrote, adding, “Our Stenography Office transcript — released to our distro, which includes the National Archives — is now different than the version edited and released to the public by Press Office staff.”<sup>8</sup>

We question whether the White House’s decision to create a false transcript and manipulate or alter the accurate transcript that was produced to NARA may be in violation of federal law, including the Presidential Records Act of 1978.<sup>9</sup>

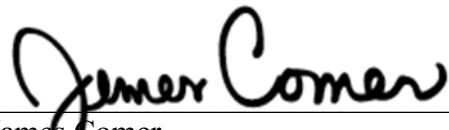
Thus, we demand the White House (1) produce all documents and internal communications regarding President Biden’s statement and the release of the inaccurate transcript, (2) release the accurate version of the transcript the White House Stenographers submitted to NARA, and (3) immediately make available the White House Stenography Office’s top supervisor for a briefing to the Oversight Committee.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jake Greenberg or Clark Abourisk with the Committee on Oversight and Accountability 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 matter.

Sincerely,



Elise Stefanik  
Chairwoman  
House Republican Conference



James Comer  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

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

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<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *See* Presidential Records Act of 1978, 44 U.S.C. §2201 et seq.; *see also* Federal Records Act of 1950 44 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq.