

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

March 12, 2025

Mr. David Warrington
Counsel to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Warrington,

I write regarding a White House event that appeared to endorse Tesla motor cars in violation of federal ethics laws. Americans are struggling to afford groceries, childcare, and housing. They are bracing themselves for the impact of the Trump Administration's tariffs and other inflationary policies. They are watching their investments in the stock market plummet since President Trump took office. And they have been told by the President to prepare for a recession. President Trump's solution to the mounting economic crises is a car ad that he hoped would boost the stock price of Tesla, a company headed by one of his biggest campaign donors who is also a federal employee, Elon Musk.¹ The President also offered to write Mr. Musk a personal check for the Tesla vehicle of President's choice, reported to be worth more than \$70,000.² To better understand how President Trump and Elon Musk are using the White House for self-enrichment and ignoring blatant conflicts of interest, I ask that you provide a full accounting of any executive branch employees, special or otherwise, that participated in this event and cease any activities that endorse a specific product or company.

Federal law expressly prohibits federal employees' "use of their Government position or title or any authority associated with their public office to endorse any product, service, or enterprise."³ Media reports show that the Tesla corporation "delivered five of its vehicles to the White House and parked them on a driveway" in what could only be described as turning "the White House lawn into a Tesla showroom."⁴ This event included photo opportunities of the President beside Elon Musk, Tesla's Chief Executive Officer, in Tesla vehicles that undoubtedly gave the "appearance of governmental sanction" of Tesla products.⁵ The President's earlier

¹ *Trump Turns the White House Lawn into a Tesla Showroom*, NBC News (Mar. 11, 2025) (online at www.nbcnews.com/tech/elon-musk/trump-musk-tesla-white-house-showroom-buys-car-rcna195905).

² *Id.*

³ 5 C.F.R. § 2635.702 (2025).

⁴ *Trump Turns the White House Lawn into a Tesla Showroom*, NBC News (Mar. 11, 2025) (online at www.nbcnews.com/tech/elon-musk/trump-musk-tesla-white-house-showroom-buys-car-rcna195905).

⁵ *Id.*; *President Trump Poses with Tesla Vehicles in 'Show of Confidence' for Elon Musk: See Photos*, USA

social media description of Tesla as “one of the World’s great automakers, and Elon’s ‘baby,’” further raises questions about whether a special government employee may have induced the President to further endorse a product or company.⁶

To determine the severity of the ethical violation in this case, please provide answers to the following questions by March 26, 2025:

1. What government employees and resources were involved in staging the event involving the display of Tesla vehicles at the White House?
2. What communications did the White House have with Tesla prior to the event?
3. Who in the White House has a financial interest in Tesla and what role did relevant personnel have in the staging of this event?
4. Was the White House Counsel, Office of Government Ethics, or Office of the Special Counsel consulted prior to this event?
5. Were there any conversations that outlined how this event would address rising prices for Americans?

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. The Committee also has legislative jurisdiction over federal personnel. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Committee Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman

Today (Mar. 11, 2025) (online at www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2025/03/11/trump-tesla-white-house-elon-musk/82276404007/); Tesla, Inc. Form 10-K, (Jan. 29, 2025) (online at www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1318605/000162828025003063/tsla-20241231.htm).

⁶ Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) Truth Social, (Mar. 11, 2025) (online at <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114141854575248527>).