

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074  
MINORITY (202) 225-6061

<https://oversight.house.gov>

January 9, 2026

Mr. Michael K. Wirth  
Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive  
Officer  
Chevron  
1400 Smith Street  
Houston, TX 77002

Mr. Darren W. Woods  
Executive Chair and Chief Executive  
Officer  
ExxonMobil  
22777 Springwoods Village Parkway  
Spring, TX 77389

Mr. Ryan Lance  
Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive  
Officer  
ConocoPhillips  
925 North Eldridge Parkway  
Houston, TX 77079

Mr. Robert “Doug” Lawler  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Continental Resources  
20 North Broadway  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Dear Mr. Wirth, Mr. Woods, Mr. Lance, and Mr. Lawler:

President Trump has put U.S. oil companies at the center of his escalating interventions in Venezuela. On January 3, 2026, just hours after the U.S. military operation capturing Venezuela’s president, Nicolás Maduro, was carried out absent congressional authorization, President Trump stated that U.S. oil companies would “go in” to Venezuela “to take out money,” “take back the oil,” and be “reimbursed for what [you’re] doing.”<sup>1</sup> He also stated that “we’re gonna have a presence in Venezuela as pertains to oil” and that “we’re gonna be taking out a

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<sup>1</sup> *Press Conference: Donald Trump Discusses the Capture of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela*, Roll Call (Jan. 3, 2026) (online at <https://rollcall.com/factbase/trump/transcript/donald-trump-press-conference-venezuela-maduro-january-3-2026/>).

tremendous amount wealth out of the ground.”<sup>2</sup> Oversight Committee Democrats are investigating any corrupt motives for private or personal gain that may be driving the Trump Administration’s decision to put American lives at risk to seize control of a sovereign nation’s natural resources.

The President’s comments came as a surprise to the American people, but perhaps not to your executives. Reportedly, President Trump had privately told oil companies to “get ready” for political changes in Venezuela approximately one month before the rendition operation.<sup>3</sup> Congress and the American public had no comparable notice. Additionally, at least ten days before the raid, Administration officials had reportedly told companies, “you gotta go in [to Venezuela] if you want to play and get reimbursed,” according to one industry official.<sup>4</sup> During a recent discussion with reporters on Air Force One, the President appeared to confirm that he had spoken to “all” oil companies before the raid on Venezuelan soil.<sup>5</sup> These statements contradict other public reporting, including reference to sources at U.S. oil companies that claimed they did not have contact with the White House either before or after the rendition of President Maduro.<sup>6</sup>

Previous reports have demonstrated the close relationship between the Trump Administration and oil companies. On May 9, 2024, the *Washington Post* reported that former President Trump had convened about two dozen oil executives at Mar-a-Lago, promising favorable policies in exchange for \$1 billion in campaign contributions.<sup>5</sup> Fossil fuel industry interests have contributed heavily to President Trump and have benefitted tens of billions of dollars as a result of President Trump’s policy changes.<sup>7</sup> Now, oil companies reportedly want the Trump Administration to provide “boots-on-the-ground security and some financial security” in Venezuela.<sup>8</sup> Oil company executives are reportedly scheduled to meet at the White House today to discuss plans for Venezuela with President Trump and cabinet officials.<sup>9</sup>

Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez, who has assumed de jure leadership over the country in Maduro’s absence, previously directed Venezuela’s state-owned oil company to

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<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Trump’s Hint to Oil Executives Weeks Before Maduro Ouster: ‘Get Ready’*, Wall Street Journal (Jan. 5, 2026) (online at [www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/venezuela-chevron-trump-strikes-maduro-195eb6e3](http://www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/venezuela-chevron-trump-strikes-maduro-195eb6e3)).

<sup>4</sup> *Trump Admin Sends Tough Private Message to Oil Companies on Venezuela*, Politico (Jan. 3, 2026) (online at [www.politico.com/news/2026/01/03/trump-venezuela-oil-us-companies-return-00709782](http://www.politico.com/news/2026/01/03/trump-venezuela-oil-us-companies-return-00709782)).

<sup>5</sup> *Donald Trump Says He Spoke to Oil Companies Before Venezuela Action*, Newsweek (Jan. 5, 2026) (online at [www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-oil-companies-venezuela-action-11307459](http://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-oil-companies-venezuela-action-11307459)).

<sup>6</sup> *Oil Companies Contradict Donald Trump’s Remarks on Venezuela Consultation*, Newsweek (Jan. 5, 2026) (online at [www.newsweek.com/oil-companies-dispute-trump-venezuela-maduro-consultation-11310309](http://www.newsweek.com/oil-companies-dispute-trump-venezuela-maduro-consultation-11310309)).

<sup>7</sup> *Candidate Trump Promised Oil Executives a Windfall. Now, They’re Getting It.*, New York Times (July 30, 2025) (online at [www.nytimes.com/2025/07/30/climate/trump-campaign-funding-oil-industry-tax-breaks.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/30/climate/trump-campaign-funding-oil-industry-tax-breaks.html)).

<sup>8</sup> *Trump Administration Launches New Bid to Pressure US Oil Companies on Venezuela*, Politico (Jan. 5, 2026) (online at [www.politico.com/news/2026/01/05/trump-venezuela-oil-fields-00710893](http://www.politico.com/news/2026/01/05/trump-venezuela-oil-fields-00710893)).

<sup>9</sup> *Trump to Meet with Oil Execs About Venezuela on Friday*, Politico (Jan. 6, 2026) (online at [www.politico.com/news/2026/01/06/trump-oil-execs-venezuela-00713364](http://www.politico.com/news/2026/01/06/trump-oil-execs-venezuela-00713364)).

donate \$500,000 to President Trump's first inauguration and appears to be cooperating with President Trump's plans.<sup>10</sup>

To determine who stands to privately or personally benefit from President Trump's actions and whether corrupt motives were a driving force in U.S. foreign policy decisions, we ask that you provide answers and associated materials to the following questions and information requests by January 23, 2026:

1. All communications between your company, including on the personal devices of its executives, and the White House, Department of Defense, Department of State, Department of Energy, Department of the Interior, or any member of the Trump Administration regarding Venezuela before January 3, 2026;
2. All communications between your company, including on the personal devices of its executives, and the White House, Department of Defense, Department of State, Department of Energy, Department of the Interior, or any member of the Trump Administration regarding Venezuela between January 3, 2026, to present;
3. All communications between your company and the Venezuelan government from January 21, 2025, to present;
4. All communications to date between your company, including on the personal devices of its executives, and any member of the Trump Organization regarding Venezuela;
5. All communications to date between your company, including on the personal devices of its executives, and Paul Singer or any employee of Elliott Management regarding Venezuela;
6. The names and titles of any individuals from your company who attended a meeting with President Trump and members of his administration on or about January 9, 2026, to discuss plans related to Venezuela;
7. Copies of any materials distributed or shared with attendees by any participant or entity during, in advance of, or following the meeting;
8. A description of any requests made by your company to the Trump Administration or any member of the Trump Administration related to Venezuela, including but not limited to policy changes, security guarantees, financial assurances (e.g., allocation of revenues from extracting and selling Venezuelan oil, government subsidies, purchase or price guarantees, loan assistance, or direct appropriations), or any other incentives;

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<sup>10</sup> *How Delcy Rodríguez Courted Trump and Rose to Power in Venezuela*, NBC News (Jan. 7, 2026) (online at [www.nbcnews.com/world/venezuela/delcy-rodriguez-courted-trump-rose-to-power-rcna252772](https://www.nbcnews.com/world/venezuela/delcy-rodriguez-courted-trump-rose-to-power-rcna252772)); *Trump Says U.S. Oversight of Venezuela Could Last for Years*, New York Times (Jan. 8, 2026) (online at [www.nytimes.com/2026/01/08/us/politics/trump-interview-venezuela.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/08/us/politics/trump-interview-venezuela.html)).

9. A description of any promises made by the Trump Administration or any member of the Trump Administration to your company or other companies related to Venezuela, including but not limited to policy changes, security guarantees, financial assurances (e.g., allocation of revenues from extracting and selling Venezuelan oil, government subsidies, purchase or price guarantees, loan assistance, or direct appropriations), or any other incentives;
10. The measures your company has taken to ensure that its dealings with the Trump Administration, any member of the Trump Administration, and the Venezuelan regime comply with U.S. anticorruption laws, including the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act;
11. What outstanding or residual claims, if any, your company has to assets in Venezuela; and
12. Any information regarding the potential for oil extraction in Venezuela including risks, reserve size, costs, quality of the reserves, and legal rights.

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. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Committee Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



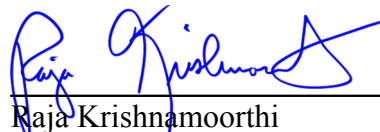
Robert Garcia  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and  
Government Reform



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



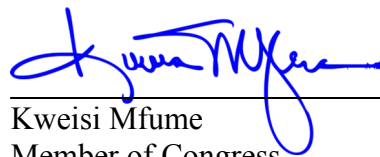
Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



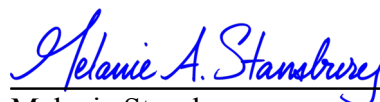
Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume  
Member of Congress



Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



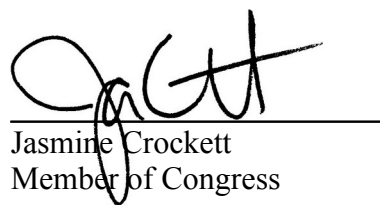
Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress



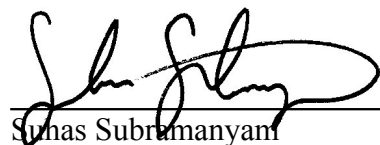
Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



Emily Randall  
Member of Congress



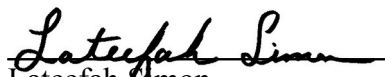
Sunas Subramanyam  
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell  
Member of Congress

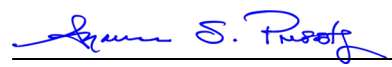



Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress



Dave Min  
Member of Congress

  
James R. Walkinshaw  
Member of Congress

  
Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress

  
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress