

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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May 14, 2026

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick:

We demand your resignation as secretary of the Department of Commerce. During your May 6, 2026, transcribed interview regarding your relationship with Jeffrey Epstein, you were unable to explain why you lied about the length and depth of your relationship with Epstein.¹ You attempted to evade responsibility for your actions and avoided being clear with the American people. The facts are clear: you lied to the American people and attempted to conceal your relationship with Jeffrey Epstein in your public statements.² Your lack of candor demonstrates that you are unfit to perform the duties required of you as secretary of Commerce, and you must step down immediately.

You have publicly maintained that you were “one and done” with Epstein after a single visit to his home, explaining on a podcast in 2025 that **“I was never in the room with him socially, for business, or even philanthropy.”**³ During your transcribed interview, you were presented with clear evidence that you corresponded and physically met with Epstein on multiple occasions prior to his arrest in 2019, including traveling to his private island where you attended what you described as “a social lunch” with him and your family.⁴ Your statement to the press was demonstrably false, and even Chairman James Comer admitted that you were not “100% truthful” in your prior statements.⁵

¹ Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Transcribed Interview of Howard Lutnick (May 6, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Lutnick-Transcript.pdf>).

² YouTube, *Howard Lutnick on Living Next Door to Epstein, Surviving 9/11 & Late-Night Calls with Trump*, Pod Force One with Miranda Devine (Oct. 1, 2025) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8_s4Z2TQAE).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Transcribed Interview of Howard Lutnick (May 6, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Lutnick-Transcript.pdf>).

⁵ *Watch: Comer Says Commerce Secretary Lutnick Hasn't Been “100% Truthful” About Epstein's Island*, PBS (May 6, 2026) (online at www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/watch-comer-says-commerce-secretary-lutnick-hasnt-been-100-truthful-about-epsteins-island).

Given the opportunity to come clean, you instead offered implausible distinctions and semantic games. When asked directly whether your prior public statements about your relationship with Epstein were misleading, you flatly denied it:

It was not misleading, no. You now know what I said, and you know what I meant, and it is clear from the words that I was accurate.⁶

You further insisted you were never “with” Epstein at his island because your wife was present, absurdly claiming that “I” referred to you alone, not in the presence of your family. When Committee staff attempted to clarify your comments, you doubled down:

Q: We all understand that you were in the room with [Epstein] in a social setting, but you have insisted that this sentence is accurate. So I just—that does not make sense on its face, and I just want to understand how that could be.

A: “I” refers to Howard Lutnick. “We” refers to my wife and myself together. I didn't say we didn't discuss that we would never be with him. We discussed that I, as a man, would not, and I, as a man, was never.

So I think this is entirely accurate. Howard Lutnick was never with him socially, philanthropically, right, or in a business setting. I was never.

I was with my wife on two meaningless and inconsequential interactions, but I was never with him. So that was the point.⁷

No reasonable person would accept this account, and you abandoned it the moment Rep. Suhas Subramanyam applied the same logic:

Mr. Subramanyam: When you're sitting down with [Epstein] talking about scaffolding, aren't you with him in that room? Even if your wife is there, you're both with him, right?

A: Sure.

Mr. Subramanyam: Are you and I with each other right now? Are we in the same room right now?

A: Yes.⁸

⁶ Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Transcribed Interview of Howard Lutnick (May 6, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Lutnick-Transcript.pdf>).

⁷ *Id.* (emphasis added).

⁸ *Id.*

Your evasions did not stop there. You claimed not to remember how the island visit was arranged, who coordinated it, or whether you knew Epstein had pleaded guilty to crimes involving solicitation of a minor. You claimed to find the circumstance of Epstein’s invitation to his island “unsettling” and “inexplicable,” and offered no credible explanation for how the visit occurred or why you accepted the invitation and brought your wife and children.⁹

When asked whether you had discussed Epstein, Ghislaine Maxwell, or the Epstein files with President Trump, you flatly refused to answer, offering neither an objection nor an assertion of privilege.¹⁰ Nothing justifies shielding discussions of your personal relationship with a convicted sex offender from congressional oversight. Instead, you chose to further the White House cover up.

Finally, although you characterized your appearance as voluntary, it was scheduled only after Rep. Nancy Mace announced a bipartisan motion to subpoena and compel your testimony.¹¹ In a departure from this Committee’s practice in the Epstein investigation, Oversight Republicans declined to videotape your interview, sparing the public from viewing the evasiveness and dishonesty that the transcript alone cannot fully convey.¹²

A cabinet secretary’s most basic obligation to Congress is candor; your statements have a bearing on the lives of all Americans. You used a congressional interview not to correct the record, but to perpetuate a false public narrative. You contradicted prior statements and stonewalled on basic questions. A secretary who will parse the meaning of plain English to avoid acknowledging his own words, claim no recollection of a documented visit to a convicted sex offender’s private island, and refuse to answer basic questions about his conversations with the President cannot be trusted to serve as a leader in the federal government.

We therefore call on you to resign immediately as secretary of Commerce.

Sincerely,

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Transcribed Interview of Howard Lutnick (May 6, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Lutnick-Transcript.pdf>).

¹² *Id.*; see Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Republicans, *Press Release: Oversight Committee Releases Bill and Hillary Clinton Deposition Videos* (Mar. 2, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/release/oversight-committee-releases-bill-and-hillary-clinton-deposition-videos/>); YouTube, *The Deposition of Ghislaine Maxwell on the Epstein Probe*, (Feb. 9, 2026) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhK5Ygh-EfY); Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Republicans, *Press Release: Oversight Committee Releases Richard Kahn and Darren Indyke Deposition Videos* (Mar. 24, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/release/oversight-committee-releases-richard-kahn-and-darren-indyke-deposition-videos/>); Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Republicans, *Press Release: Oversight Committee Releases Les Wexner Deposition Video* (Feb. 19, 2026) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/release/oversight-committee-releases-les-wexner-deposition-video/>).



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Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform



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Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



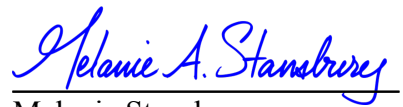
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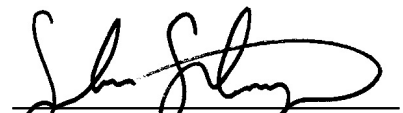
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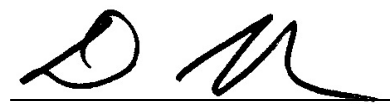


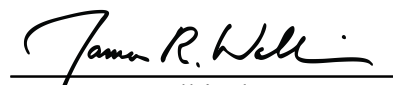
Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress

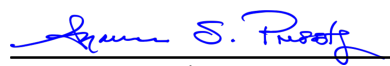

Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress

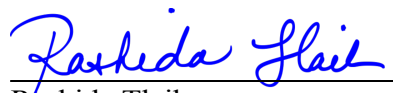

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Member of Congress


Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress


Dave Min
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress


Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress


Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman