

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074

MINORITY (202) 225-5051

<https://oversight.house.gov>

February 20, 2024

Mr. Stefan Passantino  
Elections LLC  
1050 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Suite 500  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Passantino:

I was baffled and amused by your letter alleging that my account of your client's testimony was a "grotesque mischaracterization."<sup>1</sup> Having reviewed the transcript of Mr. Bobulinski's lengthy transcribed interview, I stand proudly by my statement that over the course of his more than eight hours of belabored testimony, Mr. Bobulinski did not offer any evidence of wrongdoing by President Biden. He also did not provide any evidence that President Biden was involved in his family's business dealings. Furthermore, unable to point to any evidence to support his wild claims against President Biden, Mr. Bobulinski casually accused a broad group of individuals and organizations of lying. He accused multiple Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents of lying in their Form FD-302 report, the *Wall Street Journal* of lying in its reporting which dismissed Mr. Bobulinski's claims as baseless, Cassidy Hutchinson of lying about what she saw with her own eyes, his former business partners of lying, as well as nine of Republicans' own witnesses of lying because they have carefully affirmed that President Biden was not involved in his son's business ventures.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, your client's interview was chaotic to the point of burlesque as he repeatedly yelled, shouted, filibustered, and hurled outlandish and baseless accusations and insults against Democratic Members and staff. Nonetheless, allow me, first, to pierce the fog of his vituperative fulminations to share with you several obvious instances from Mr. Bobulinski's testimony in which he accused a multitude of individuals and organizations of lying:

---

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Stefan Passantino to Ranking Member Jamie Raskin, Committee on Oversight and Accountability (Feb. 14, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Letter%20to%20Ranking%20Member%20Raskin.pdf>).

<sup>2</sup> Committee on Oversight and Accountability Democrats, *Press Release: Ranking Member Raskin's Statement on Transcribed Interview with Tony Bobulinski* (Feb. 14, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/news/press-releases/ranking-member-raskin-s-statement-on-transcribed-interview-with-tony-bobulinski>).

- **The *Wall Street Journal***
  - In reference to a *Wall Street Journal* article concluding that “text messages and emails related to the venture that were provided to the Journal by Mr. Bobulinski, mainly from the spring and summer of 2017, don’t show either Hunter Biden or James Biden discussing a role for Joe Biden in the venture,” your client stated, “that’s a lie.”<sup>3</sup>
  - In another instance, your client testified, “The *Wall Street Journal* printed a lie.”<sup>4</sup>
- **Multiple FBI agents present for his October 2020 voluntary interview**<sup>5</sup>
  - Throughout his transcribed interview, Mr. Bobulinski repeatedly questioned the accuracy of multiple FBI agents’ official account of his voluntary interview in October 2020 in which he reiterated his allegations against the Biden family. Mr. Bobulinski alleged that many of the key details recorded in the FBI’s Form FD-302 report were false, despite being reminded during the transcribed interview that it is a formal summary of his statements that would have been signed off on by all of the agents present that day. This included the FBI agents’ description that “BOBULINSKI first met in person with members of the BIDEN family at a 2017 meeting in Miami, Florida” and that “At the meeting, BOBULINSKI witnessed a large diamond gemstone given as a gift to HUNTER BIDEN by YE.” Your client said that the FBI’s account was “an absolute lie” and had the following exchange with Representative Dan Goldman:<sup>6</sup>

Q: I am asking you whether or not this is an accurate representation of what the FBI –

---

<sup>3</sup> *Hunter Biden’s Ex-Business Partner Alleges Father Knew About Venture*, Wall Street Journal (Oct. 23, 2020) (online at [www.wsj.com/articles/hunter-bidens-ex-business-partner-alleges-father-knew-about-venture-11603421247](https://www.wsj.com/articles/hunter-bidens-ex-business-partner-alleges-father-knew-about-venture-11603421247)); Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 80 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

<sup>4</sup> Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 157 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

<sup>5</sup> See Append. B, Exhibit 400A: Tony Bobulinski FBI FD-302 Interview Memorandum, Staff Report, Committee on Ways & Means, *Report on Materials Presented to the Committee on Ways and Means Under 26 U.S.C. § 6103* (Sept. 27, 2023) (online at [https://gop-waysandmeans.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WM-Staff-Report\\_09.27.2023.pdf](https://gop-waysandmeans.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WM-Staff-Report_09.27.2023.pdf)).

<sup>6</sup> Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 174–175 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

A: No, it's not an accurate statement. It's a lie. And I never said to the FBI that I witnessed a large diamond.

- Further, when asked if the FBI's summary report "was false," your client declared, "The report is false. It's evident that it's false."<sup>7</sup>

- **Cassidy Hutchinson, Former Assistant to President Trump's Chief of Staff Mark Meadows**

- Mr. Bobulinski was asked about Ms. Hutchinson's account of an "out of sight" meeting between himself and Mr. Meadows during a Trump campaign rally in Rome, Georgia, in November 2020. Ms. Hutchinson recalled witnessing Mr. Bobulinski – who was wearing a "ski mask" to conceal his identity — accept "what appeared to be a folded sheet of paper or small envelope" from Mr. Meadows. In response, your client stated, "Cassidy Hutchinson is an absolute liar and a fraud."<sup>8</sup>
- Your client later added: "She [Ms. Hutchinson] never saw Mark Meadows give me anything, and her claims and use of that to perpetuate the sales of her book and go on all these, you know, medias to talk about is disgusting, okay? I spent 6 years serving this country. I was willing to die for this country. And for her to fabricate facts and then distribute them in a book and put them out to the American people is blatantly ridiculous. She's a liar."<sup>9</sup>

- **James Gilliar, Former Business Partner of Mr. Bobulinski, Hunter Biden, and James Biden**

- Mr. Bobulinski was asked about Mr. Gilliar's unequivocal statement to the *Wall Street Journal* that he was "unaware of any involvement at any time of the former Vice President," and your client answered, "what an absolute lie."<sup>10</sup>

Next, let me remind you how, in describing his two conversations with President Biden, Mr. Bobulinski made clear they did not include any discussion of Mr. Bobulinski's business

---

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 63.

<sup>8</sup> Cassidy Hutchinson, *Enough* (2023); Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 81 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 261.

<sup>10</sup> *Hunter Biden's Ex-Business Partner Alleges Father Knew About Venture*, *Wall Street Journal* (Oct. 23, 2020) (online at [www.wsj.com/articles/hunter-bidens-ex-business-partner-alleges-father-knew-about-venture-11603421247](http://www.wsj.com/articles/hunter-bidens-ex-business-partner-alleges-father-knew-about-venture-11603421247)); Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 264 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

venture with Hunter Biden, James Biden, and two other partners, James Gilliar and Rob Walker. Your client testified that these two conversations both happened within a 24-hour span in Los Angeles in May 2017. President Biden, then a private citizen, had flown to Los Angeles to speak at the Milken Institute’s Global Conference about his Cancer Moonshot initiative. In response to Republican questions, Mr. Bobulinski twice described the detailed content of these conversations. Both times, he testified that the conversation focused on his “background in detail,” the Biden “family’s background,” and President Biden’s “appreciation for the military.”<sup>11</sup> Mr. Bobulinski’s account made clear he did not discuss the business venture with President Biden.<sup>12</sup>

Third, in his testimony, Mr. Bobulinski covered how JPMorgan Chase, as the venture’s bank, conducted extensive due diligence. Mr. Bobulinski, the venture’s point-person in dealing with JPMorgan Chase, testified that he was truthful and forthcoming with the bank. He specifically explained that he represented to JPMorgan Chase that the entity was “legitimate” and pursuing “legitimate business” with the Chinese entity CEFC and confirmed none of his disclosures to JPMorgan Chase had described President Biden or the “the Big Guy” as having any share or role in the venture.<sup>13</sup>

Q: And you described how for both of these—you know, these were legitimate businesses that—right? Both of these entities were legitimate entities?

A: Your question is sort of implying that they weren’t legitimate? Is that—

Q: No, I’m just clarifying.

A: Do I believe they were legitimate?

Q: Yes.

A: Of course. I represented this to JP Morgan. If they weren’t legitimate, I would be committing bank fraud, wire fraud, and a whole host of other things. So, yeah, I believe they were an operating business and more than legitimate.<sup>14</sup>

\* \* \*

Q: Did you disclose to Oneida Holdings [*sic*] [JPMorgan Chase] that there was a secret partner with a secret share in Oneida Holdings—

---

<sup>11</sup> Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 50–51, 270 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* at 48–52, 268–271 (For reference, Mr. Bobulinski’s full account of these two conversations are at pp. 48–52 and 268–271 of the transcript.).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at 196, 233–234.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 233–234.

A: Why would I disclose that to JP Morgan on May 24th?

Q: —referred to as the big guy?

A: I sent them the operating agreement that was fully executed and Oneida's operating agreement. They could see exactly, you know, what LLCs were involved, and they had to actually report that. So I don't—no, I never had a discussion with JP Morgan referencing anything about a secret anything.

Q: No big guy secretly being involved in the company in your disclosure to JP Morgan?

A: I did not.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, despite your client's repeated protestations and proclamations that he was "not a political person," the substance of his testimony contradicted this claim and indicate the gentleman was protesting a little too much.<sup>16</sup> After repeated questioning, he admitted that Jason Miller, who then served as a Senior Advisor for the Trump 2020 presidential campaign, kicked off Mr. Bobulinski's press conference on October 22, 2020, event at which Mr. Bobulinski first made his public claims against President Biden. He also finally admitted after numerous comical evasions that when he attended the presidential debate on October 22, 2020, he was "a guest of Mr. Trump's."<sup>17</sup>

Despite these pained and grudging admissions, Mr. Bobulinski claimed to have no memory of any further details regarding the role of Trump Administration and campaign officials in organizing the October 2020 press conference:

Q: Your October 2020 press conference at the Marriott in Nashville, Tennessee, who organized that for you?

Mr. Passantino: I guess you can answer, again, to the extent you know.

Mr. Bobulinski: Organized what for me exactly, I'm asking?

Q: There were journalists there with cameras. There was a room. Who put all that together?

A: I had no involvement in that. I had no involvement in that.

Q: You just happened to waltz into a room with a bunch of journalists eager to hear your story.

---

<sup>15</sup> *Id.* at 235–236.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.* at 11, 55.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 147.

Mr. Passantino: Respectfully, he's answered this question. I don't mind, you can answer it again, but –

Q: Is your answer that you don't know who organized it?

A: I do not. I don't. It was—I wasn't involved in it.<sup>18</sup>

In an effort to refresh Mr. Bobulinski's recollection, I am attaching an excerpt from a book by Michael Bender, the former *Wall Street Journal* journalist to whom you, Arthur Schwartz, and Eric Herschmann, who all had ties to the Trump Administration and family, first pitched Mr. Bobulinski's story at Mr. Schwartz's home in October 2020. Mr. Bobulinski called into that meeting and was placed on speakerphone to speak with Mr. Bender.<sup>19</sup> As Mr. Bender's account makes clear, Trump Administration and campaign officials, and even President Trump himself, were involved in setting up Mr. Bobulinski's press conference, even providing Mr. Bobulinski with a dress shirt for the event: “[Jason] Miller was annoyed to be stuck with the supremely stupid task of figuring out Bobulinski's neck size and sleeve length and then finding a field staffer to hustle to the department store to buy a button-down shirt.”<sup>20</sup> I realize, of course, that the *Wall Street Journal* and its journalists were part of the long list of liars Mr. Bobulinski called out last week, but I do hope Mr. Bender's vivid account will refresh his memory of how he got dressed that day and who dressed him.

In light of these quotes of your client's own testimony under oath, I hope you will withdraw your claims that I have been “perpetuat[ing] false narratives.”<sup>21</sup> Far from engaging in “character assassination,” the Committee's Democratic Members and staff have simply been working to ensure that the American public have all the facts and context to properly evaluate Mr. Bobulinski's overheated claims against the President of the United States.<sup>22</sup> To that end, please ensure Mr. Bobulinski provides the materials Mr. Bobulinski offered up in his interview, including (1) the receipt for the private jet he used to travel to Nashville, Tennessee, in October 2020 to give his press conference and attend the presidential debate as former President Trump's guest, as well as (2) Mr. Bobulinski's blackberry device, so that we can examine the full scope of messages and not simply the cherry-picked excerpts Mr. Bobulinski photographed and turned over to the Committee's Republican staff.<sup>23</sup> Further, I trust you will join me in calling on Chairman Comer immediately to release the video of Mr. Bobulinski's truly extraordinary

---

<sup>18</sup> *Id.* at 259–260.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Bender, *Frankly We Did Win This Election: The Inside Story of How Trump Lost* (2021)

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> Letter from Stefan Passantino to Ranking Member Jamie Raskin, Committee on Oversight and Accountability (Feb. 14, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Letter%20to%20Ranking%20Member%20Raskin.pdf>).

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> Committee on Oversight and Accountability and Committee on the Judiciary, Transcribed Interview of Anthony Bobulinski at 65–66, 141 (Feb. 13, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Bobulinski-Transcript.pdf>).

Mr. Stefan Passantino

Page 7

interview so that the American people can judge directly who is telling the truth and who is prevaricating at every turn.

I agree that we are upon “the death throes of a political narrative that will be shattered upon the imminent public release of Mr. Bobulinski’s testimony before the House Committees on Oversight and Judiciary,” as you say.<sup>24</sup> That narrative is Mr. Bobulinski’s.

Very truly yours,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jamie Raskin  
Ranking Member

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman

---

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Stefan Passantino to Ranking Member Jamie Raskin, Committee on Oversight and Accountability (Feb. 14, 2024) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Letter%20to%20Ranking%20Member%20Raskin.pdf>).

the *Journal's* rigorous editing process no longer meant anything. By Tuesday, Herschmann was back digging through Bobulinski's documents in search of a silver bullet. Passantino tried to calm Bobulinski, who was sure his life was in danger and had retreated to a safe house.

On Wednesday, Trump's team coordinated with Senate Republicans, who wrote emails to Bobulinski and the other business partners involved in Hunter's project, referencing documents that had been released as part of the *New York Post's* now ongoing series on Hunter's laptop, and asking for copies of all records related to the business venture. Bobulinski was the only investor who responded.

On Thursday, the morning of the second and final presidential debate in Nashville, Homeland Security Committee chairman Ron Johnson and Finance Committee chairman Chuck Grassley announced that they had received Bobulinski's records and would speak with him for an informal interview on Friday.

After all, Bobulinski couldn't speak to them any sooner. He had an important date on Thursday.



Trump arrived in Nashville more than six hours before his final debate with Joe Biden. But not for debate prep. Trump hadn't bothered with much debate prep this time. Instead, it was for a fundraiser at the JW Marriott Nashville. The event attracted Kid Rock, country music singer Lee Greenwood, and former PGA champ John Daly, wearing jeans, a white golf shirt, and a blazer designed to look like an American flag. But after the fundraiser, Trump's team planned a surprise press conference, featuring none other than Tony Bobulinski.\*

Ivanka and other family members wandered in and out of the fundraiser but mostly waited in a penthouse room with other White House and campaign staff, as well as Passantino and Herschmann.

\* When Jason Miller told Trump about Bobulinski's surprise appearance, the president immediately thought of the 2016 debate when he invited me and a few other reporters to watch a few minutes of debate prep—only to spring on us several women who had accused his opponent's spouse, Bill Clinton, of sexual misconduct. "This is kinda like when you guys brought the women to debate in 2016?" Trump asked Miller in Nashville. "Kinda," Miller told him. "Okay," Trump said. "Go for it."

"This Hunter stuff we've got," Passantino told some of the others in the room. "It's a bombshell!"

Bobulinski was still on his way in from California, and Trump aides found themselves troubleshooting a pair of only-in-Trump-World problems. The first was that Bobulinski had boarded the plane with a suit but no dress shirt.

"What's he wearing?" Jason Miller asked Passantino.

"Well, he's wearing his suit," Passantino said.

"Who the fuck puts on a suit but not a dress shirt?" Miller said.

Miller was annoyed to be stuck with the supremely stupid task of figuring out Bobulinski's neck size and sleeve length and then finding a field staffer to hustle to the department store to buy a button-down shirt. But that irritation was quickly eclipsed by a much more urgent issue as Meadows sauntered up to Miller.

"Hey, so, um, do you know about a private plane flying in?" Meadows asked.

The White House chief explained that Nashville was effectively a no-fly zone while Trump was on the ground. The military threatened to blast Bobulinski out of the sky if his plane didn't immediately turn around.

"So these guys are telling the truth?" Meadows asked. "They're coming to see you?"

"Yes, it's Bobulinski," Miller said.

"Uuuuuggghhh," Meadows said, rubbing his temples. "Let me go see what I can do."

The White House cleared the air restrictions. Bobulinski landed in Nashville and found two black Suburbans waiting to drive him and his entourage—including bodyguards and attorneys—back to the Marriott where a selection of dress shirts awaited Trump World's hero of the moment. He picked a white shirt, which fit nicely. But the suit jacket he brought was too tight to button.

Miller had pushed to have Trump join Bobulinski at the news conference, but no one could agree. Farah suggested a guerrilla-style news conference where Trump and Bobulinski would cross paths in front of the hotel, and the president could spend a few minutes with him before continuing on his way. No one knew what Bobulinski would say, so they decided not to put any campaign banners behind him for the news conference. The internal debate continued until thirty minutes before it was set to start. In the end, Bobulinski was sent into the media room mostly on his own.



"Ladies and gentlemen, Tony Bobulinski!" Miller announced.

Bobulinski walked into a conference room that looked like every other Marriott conference room across the country: beige walls, nylon carpet with a geometric pattern, and shades of blue and gray. What followed was equally lackluster. Bobulinski wore a confused look for much of it, his right eyebrow almost constantly raised, and his nose and mouth puckered like he'd just eaten something sour. He had three mobile phones, which contained all of the Hunter Biden messages and that he had carried into the hotel in a toiletry bag. Bobulinski had a statement to read, but with no lectern set up, he asked the media for a chair, which he used as a table on which to set down the iPhones and read his statement. Miller slid the chair into the shot, then retreated again to his seat in the corner.

Bobulinski's short statement was the Wikipedia version of his dealings with Hunter Biden. He said he'd had a dispute over money with Hunter, that Joe Biden knew more about his son's business pursuits than he had admitted, and that he planned to tell everything he knew to a Senate committee the next day. Bobulinski answered two questions and then decided that was enough and left the room. CNN and MSNBC didn't carry him live, and when Miller returned to the team's penthouse suite, not one network was discussing the spectacle.

"That was amazing," Miller told the group.



In 2008, by the time Barack Obama and John McCain met onstage for their second debate in the Curb Event Center at Belmont University, the economy was in free fall as bankruptcies threatened or had already taken down the nation's largest banks and markets collapsed. Congress forked over \$700 billion to let the Treasury bail out AIG and auto companies and restore credit markets. NBC's Tom Brokaw opened the event by taking stock of what had happened since the previous debate.

"Since you last met at Ole Miss twelve days ago, the world has changed a great deal, and not for the better," Brokaw said. "We still don't know where the bottom is at this time."

Twelve years later, Trump and Biden took the stage in the same arena at the same university for a debate hosted by the same network. A historic crisis

was once again unfolding, and, just like back in 2008, it had escalated since the first debate. A few days before Nashville, on October 15, there were 60,000 new Covid cases reported in a single day in the United States.

"The country is heading into a dangerous new phase," NBC's Kristen Welker said to open the debate. "And since the two of you last shared a stage, sixteen thousand Americans have died from Covid."

Trump didn't want to talk about Covid. He was eager to go on the attack with the Bobulinski bombshell in his pocket, a pivot he was able to make before the two men had been onstage for twenty minutes. But Trump couldn't quite land it. For one, he couldn't remember Bobulinski's name—he'd referred to him as "Bo" backstage. He hadn't taken the time to understand the details, so his accusations ended up wildly off base and challenging for an average viewer to follow. Running against Hillary Clinton four years earlier had masked that shortcoming of Trump's propensity to attack in tabloid headlines. She and Biden had spent about the same amount of time in public service, but Clinton's controversies had been amplified and looped on repeat. Voters could follow Trump's jumbled word association with Clinton much more readily.

"You were getting a lot of money from Russia—they were paying you a lot of money, and they probably still are—but now, with what came out today, it's even worse," Trump said on the debate stage that night. "All of the emails—the emails, the horrible emails—and the kind of money that you were raking in, you and your family. And Joe, you were vice president when some of this was happening, and it should have never happened. And I think you owe an explanation to the American people. Why is it somebody just had a news conference a little while ago? Who was essentially supposed to work with you and your family? But what he said was damning. And regardless of me, I think you have to clean it up and talk to the American people."

The attack was muddled, at best, and still Trump wouldn't let it go. He leveled another round of accusations against Biden over his son's business dealings in Ukraine but missed the target again.

In a holding room with other staffers watching the debate, Bossie stomped across the floor.

"Fucking Jesus Christ!" he shouted.

Time was ticking away.