

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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March 27, 2025

Mr. Steven Stebbins
Acting Inspector General
Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350

Mr. Loren Sciorba
Deputy Inspector General
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Department of the Treasury
Washington, DC 20220

Ms. Sandra J. Lewis
Acting Inspector General
Department of State
PO Box 9778
Arlington, VA 22209

Mr. Robert Host
Acting Inspector General
Central Intelligence Agency
717 14th Street NW Ste 500
Washington, D.C. 20505

Mr. David Warrington
Counsel to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Acting Inspector General Stebbins, Acting Inspector General Lewis, Acting Inspector General Host, Deputy Inspector General Sciorba, and Mr. Warrington,

I write to request a full and immediate investigation following reporting by *The Atlantic* this week that several members of the National Security Council and the Cabinet of the United States disclosed and discussed highly sensitive, potentially classified plans for a military operation in Yemen on the free and open-source Signal messaging application. This incident raises grave concerns about a potential pattern of misuse of unsecured communication platforms for sensitive discussions and the possibility that American military and intelligence professionals may have been compromised by the reckless dissemination of such highly sensitive national security information.¹ It is critical that your offices investigate this matter and any other incidents in which senior national security leaders in the Trump Administration have, either through incompetence or neglect, compromised highly sensitive or classified national security information.

¹ *The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans*, The Atlantic (Mar. 24, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/trump-administration-accidentally-texted-me-its-war-plans/682151/); *Here Are the Attack Plans That Trump's Advisers Shared on Signal*, The Atlantic (Mar. 26, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/signal-group-chat-attack-plans-hegseth-goldberg/682176/).

Reports indicate that on March 13, 2025, National Security Advisor Michael Waltz created a group chat on Signal to discuss plans for a military strike on Houthi targets in Yemen and added multiple senior members of the President's Cabinet and national security team: Vice President JD Vance, Secretary Marco Rubio, Secretary Pete Hegseth, Secretary Scott Bessent, National Security Advisor Waltz, Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) John Ratcliffe, White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, and White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller. *The Atlantic* Editor-in-Chief Jeffrey Goldberg was also allegedly added to this group chat by Mr. Waltz.²

The senior Trump Administration officials went on to discuss the merits of a strike on the Houthi rebel group in Yemen, including deliberating on relevant concerns about U.S. national interests and impacts on American allies. Mr. Hegseth outlined operational information about the current position and posture of actively deployed U.S. military forces that, had it been “read by an adversary of the United States, could conceivably have been used to harm American military and intelligence personnel.”³ Specifically, Mr. Hegseth allegedly transmitted the following sensitive operational details to the Signal chain:⁴

Pete Hegseth
TEAM UPDATE:

TIME NOW (1144et): Weather is FAVORABLE. Just CONFIRMED w/ CENTCOM we are a GO for mission launch.

1215et: F-18s LAUNCH (1st strike package)

1345: “Trigger Based” F-18 1st Strike Window Starts (Target Terrorist is @ his Known Location so SHOULD BE ON TIME) — also, Strike Drones Launch (MQ-9s)

1410: More F-18s LAUNCH (2nd strike package)

1415: Strike Drones on Target (THIS IS WHEN THE FIRST BOMBS WILL DEFINITELY DROP, pending earlier “Trigger Based” targets)

1536: F-18 2nd Strike Starts — also, first sea-based Tomahawks launched.

MORE TO FOLLOW (per timeline)

We are currently clean on OPSEC.

Godspeed to our Warriors.

19m

² *The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans*, The Atlantic (Mar. 24, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/trump-administration-accidentally-texted-me-its-war-plans/682151/).

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Here Are the Attack Plans That Trump's Advisers Shared on Signal*, The Atlantic (Mar. 26, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/signal-group-chat-attack-plans-hegseth-goldberg/682176/).

Upon completion of the operation, users in the chat congratulated each other on the success of the mission with emojis, all while Mr. Goldberg watched in astonishment of the information to which he was privy.⁵ The use of Signal to communicate this information jeopardized the lives of men and women of the military and embarrassingly advertised to our adversaries the careless attitude of our nation's senior leaders.

Moreover, this extraordinary breach of trust raises concerns as to whether Mr. Waltz, Mr. Hegseth, and the other members of the Signal group acted in accordance with laws meant to protect sensitive government information and ensure retention of government records. The Espionage Act, for example, strictly limits the dissemination of sensitive and classified information to our adversaries either through intent or negligence.⁶ This incident raises questions as to whether Mr. Waltz and the other senior officials failed to comply with federal recordkeeping requirements, given the fact that "Waltz set some of the messages in the Signal group to disappear after one week, and some after four."⁷ Shockingly, during a March 25, 2025, hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee, DNI Gabbard stated that she no longer had access to the messages on the chain and refused to disclose whether she participated in such chats on her personal phone.⁸

Further, several national security experts have articulated the likelihood that these messages were monitored or intercepted by foreign governments, including one Republican Member of Congress who noted:

I will guarantee you, 99.99 percent with confidence, Russia and China are monitoring those two phones. So I just think it's a security violation, and there's no doubt that Russia and China saw this stuff within hours of the actual attacks on Yemen or the Houthis.⁹

Accordingly, I request that you immediately open an investigation into this severe breach in protocol and national trust. In addition, I am hopeful that your investigations address the following inquiries:

⁵ *The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans*, The Atlantic (Mar. 24, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/trump-administration-accidentally-texted-me-its-war-plans/682151/).

⁶ 18 U.S.C. § 793. The nature of the information communicated over this unclassified channel also calls into question whether this would qualify as an attempt to "knowingly remove[] such documents or materials without authority and with the intent to retain such documents or materials at an unauthorized location," in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1924.

⁷ *The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans*, The Atlantic (Mar. 24, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/trump-administration-accidentally-texted-me-its-war-plans/682151/). See 44 U.S.C. §§ 3101-3107 (Chapter 31, Records Management by Federal Agencies); 44 U.S.C. §§ 3301-3314 (Chapter 33, Disposal of Records); and 36 C.F.R., Chapter XII, Subchapter B (Records Management).

⁸ *The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans*, The Atlantic (Mar. 24, 2025) (online at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/trump-administration-accidentally-texted-me-its-war-plans/682151/).

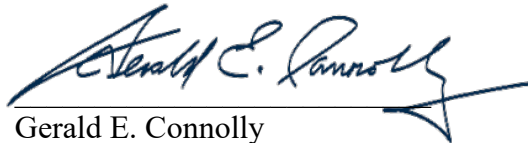
⁹ *House Republican on War Plans Chat: 'There's No Doubt That Russia and China Saw This Stuff,'* The Hill (Mar. 25, 2025) (online at <https://thehill.com/homenews/house/5212231-russian-chinese-monitoring-us-devices/>).

1. Please identify when Signal was downloaded onto the devices that participated in the Signal chat titled “Houthi PC small group.” Please identify the issuers of these devices, a determination of whether these were personal devices or devices issued by the United States Government, and the dates that these devices were issued;
2. Please provide a detailed description of the actions taken, if any, by the relevant Intelligence Community agencies to confiscate the devices on which the Signal chat titled “Houthi PC small group” was carried out. Provide a detailed assessment of whether such devices met pertinent security protocol and whether a forensic search was conducted to identify whether classified records were being stored improperly and if so, a detailed account of how these records were being preserved and stored;
3. Please provide an assessment of whether any of the devices used in the Signal chat titled “Houthi PC small group” were compromised by foreign, malign, or unintended actors;
4. Please provide an assessment of whether the members of the Signal chat titled “Houthi PC small group” employed Signal or similar messaging technology and platforms to discuss classified or sensitive information on other occasions;
5. Please identify to what extent individuals without requisite security clearances have been included, deliberately or inadvertently, in such conversations on Signal or other unclassified systems to discuss classified or sensitive information;
6. Please provide an assessment of whether existing protocols, guidance, and safeguards to prevent the disclosure of classified or sensitive information through Signal or similar messaging technology and platforms were adhered to by the members of the Signal chat titled “Houthi PC small group”;
7. Please identify whether participants of the Signal chat titled “Houthi PC small group” transported the devices on which these discussions took place outside of the United States at any time. Please identify which devices were transported outside of the United States, to whom the device was issued, and whether or not they participated in the chat during their international travel;
8. Please provide an assessment of whether the implementation and use of the Signal messaging application at agencies under your purview were conducted in compliance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA), including applicable agency-specific information security policies and procedures. As part of this assessment, please evaluate documentation of any risk assessments, authorizations to operate (ATO), and continuous monitoring activities related to this application; and

9. Please provide an assessment of whether any federal statutes or regulations governing the retention of government records or the handling of highly sensitive or classified national security information were violated in connection with the Signal chat titled "Houthi PC small group" or any similar communications by senior national security officials in the Trump Administration. Specifically, please assess whether such communications were properly preserved in accordance with the Federal Records Act, the Presidential Records Act, and applicable statutes, executive orders, and directives pertaining to the handling of highly sensitive or classified national security information.

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 regarding this request, please contact Committee Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerald E. Connolly", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman