

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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May 9, 2025

Mr. Stephen Ehikian
Acting Administrator
General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Dear Acting Administrator Ehikian:

I write with serious concerns regarding reporting that the General Services Administration (GSA) plans to award a contract for a \$25 million pilot program to a company backed by President Trump's closest political allies, circumventing protocols that call for a sufficiently stringent public bidding process.¹ This pilot program is one of multiple contracts that make up GSA's SmartPay program, which is anticipated to process \$700 billion in payments over the life of the program.² According to recent reporting, the corporate credit card and artificial intelligence software company Ramp has met frequently with high-level GSA officials over the last several weeks and appears to have begun preparing to process government payments before GSA even announced the pilot program. Ramp's investors include venture capital firms with ties to many prominent Trump-connected individuals, including Silicon Valley billionaire Peter Thiel, Jared Kushner's brother Joshua Kushner, and allies of Elon Musk. One of Ramp's earliest investors, Keith Rabois, raised more than \$1 million for Donald Trump's 2024 campaign. Mr. Rabois has since indicated that he does not need to join the Trump Administration because he can influence it from the outside, saying that he "can spoon-feed [ideas] to the right people."³ To understand the process through which GSA is selecting a contractor for the SmartPay pilot program, I request information and documents related to any bids that Ramp has submitted to GSA and recent meetings between Ramp and senior GSA officials.

¹ *Trump Team Eyes Politically Connected Startup to Overhaul \$700 Billion Government Payments Program*, ProPublica (Apr. 17, 2025) (online at www.propublica.org/article/trump-peter-thiel-ramp-gsa-smartpay-expense-payment-system).

² General Services Administration, *GSA Announces Awards for GSA SmartPay 3 Master Contracts* (Sept. 5, 2017) (online at www.gsa.gov/about-us/newsroom/news-releases/gsa-announces-awards-for-gsa-smartpay-3-09052017).

³ *Trump Team Eyes Politically Connected Startup to Overhaul \$700 Billion Government Payments Program*, ProPublica (Apr. 17, 2025) (online at www.propublica.org/article/trump-peter-thiel-ramp-gsa-smartpay-expense-payment-system).

SmartPay provides Visa and Mastercard charge cards to government employees to purchase office supplies and equipment, book travel, and pay for gas. These cards ensure that federal employees have the resources to provide critical services to the American people, and the SmartPay program is subject to significant federal oversight. Former GSA Commissioner Sonny Hashmi has called SmartPay “the lifeblood of the government,” and noted that there are “exceptional levels of oversight and fraud prevention already baked in.” Similarly, a 2017 Government Accountability Office audit found “little evidence of potential fraud” in SmartPay small purchases.⁴ Despite evidence to the contrary, the Trump Administration has claimed that SmartPay is “broken.” and has blocked access to SmartPay for workers at federal agencies that keep Americans safe, such as the National Institutes of Health and the Federal Aviation Administration.⁵ It what appears to be a textbook example of waste, fraud and abuse, the Trump Administration’s false claims about the SmartPay program may be an attempt to discredit the program to provide a new, Trump-affiliated contractor with a lucrative contract.

Even though Ramp does not have any federal contracting experience, GSA is reportedly considering granting Ramp one of the contracts that makes up the \$700 billion program that oversees the federal government’s internal expense card program. On March 20, 2025, GSA issued a request for information (RFI) for a \$25 million pilot program for the next iteration of SmartPay. This RFI remained open for an unusually short period of time—fewer than seven business days. Ramp reportedly began contacting entities in the payment industry about special bank identification numbers required to process government payments before this RFI was publicly announced, and a GSA employee recently stated that Ramp is the “favorite” to win this business.⁶

Ramp executives have met with Trump appointees at GSA at least four times. Some of these meetings were reportedly organized by high-level GSA officials like Josh Gruenbaum, commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service. According to a senior GSA official, the focus on Ramp is unusual and suspicious because “[y]ou don’t want to give this impression that leadership has already decided the winner somehow.”⁷

To understand the extent to which Ramp may have received preferential treatment from GSA in connection with the SmartPay contract, I request the following information and documents by May 23, 2025:

1. A detailed and comprehensive explanation of the selection rubric used by GSA to select contractors for the SmartPay pilot program;

⁴ *Government Purchase Cards: Little Evidence of Potential Fraud Found in Small Purchases, but Documentation Issues Exist*, U.S. Government Accountability Office (Feb. 2017) (online at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-17-276.pdf>).

⁵ *Trump Team Eyes Politically Connected Startup to Overhaul \$700 Billion Government Payments Program*, ProPublica (Apr. 17, 2025) (online at www.propublica.org/article/trump-peter-thiel-ramp-gsa-smartpay-expense-payment-system).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

2. All documents received from any company submitting a bid in response to GSA's RFI for SmartPay, including all communications from any applicant company and any GSA official;
3. A detailed list of all meetings between any GSA official and any representative of Ramp, including the titles of all GSA officials in attendance and a description of the purpose of each meeting;
4. All communications between any GSA official, contractor or subcontractor and any representative of Ramp;
5. All communications between any individual associated with GSA and any individual associated with the Executive Office of the President and/or the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) related to Ramp, SmartPay, and/or the SmartPay pilot program;
6. A list of all programs for which Ramp has submitted a bid to GSA, including the date of such submission and the corresponding bid documentation;
7. A detailed explanation of why the March 20, 2025, RFI for the SmartPay pilot program was open for fewer than seven business days, including but not limited to a list of all GSA officials, including titles, who participated in determining the timeline for this RFI; and
8. All documents and communications related to the March 20, 2025, RFI for the SmartPay pilot program.

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,



Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman