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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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February 25, 2026

Terrance C. Cole  
Administrator  
U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration  
600 Army Navy Dr  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Administrator Cole:

I write seeking information from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (“the DEA”) related to Jeffrey Epstein’s sex trafficking operations. For over three years now, my staff at the Senate Committee on Finance (“the Committee”) have been conducting an investigation into the financing of Epstein’s criminal sex trafficking organization. As part of this investigation, I am examining the extent to which Epstein was able to utilize the U.S. financial system to make thousands of suspicious wire transfers and cash withdrawals for the apparent purpose of trafficking women and girls. In addition to sex trafficking, it appears that Epstein and his associates were under investigation by the DEA for other major crimes, including illicit drug trafficking and money laundering.

As you may be aware, federal records recently unsealed by the U.S. Department of Justice (“the DOJ”) indicate that Jeffrey Epstein and members of his criminal organization were the target of a major investigation by the DEA for illicit financial activity tied to drug trafficking.<sup>1</sup> According to a heavily redacted memorandum prepared in 2015 by the Director of the DEA’s Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF), Epstein and 14 other co-conspirators were being investigated for their involvement in “illegitimate wire transfers” which were “tied to illicit drug and/or prostitution activities occurring in the U.S. Virgin Islands and New York City.”<sup>2</sup> The OCDETF operation, named “Chain Reaction”, compiled a trove of information on Epstein and his associates that included suspicious financial transactions, border

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/epstein/files/DataSet%209/EFTA00173953.pdf>

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

crossings, and other data prepared by the Treasury Department and a range of other federal law enforcement agencies.<sup>3</sup>

As you know, the fact that Epstein was under investigation by OCDETF is a serious matter. OCDETF, which the Trump Administration recently dismantled, was a premier task force set up to identify, disrupt and dismantle major organized crime and drug trafficking operations.<sup>4</sup> OCDETF worked with partners across federal agencies to conduct sophisticated investigations into transnational organized crime and money laundering. OCDETF frequently targeted dangerous drug cartels, the Russian mafia and violent gangs moving fentanyl and weapons.

The fact that Epstein was under investigation by the DOJ's OCDETF task force suggests that there was ample evidence indicating that Epstein was engaged in heavy drug trafficking and prostitution as part of cross-border criminal conspiracy. This is incredibly disturbing and raises serious questions as to how this investigation by the DEA was handled.

Since Epstein and his 14 co-conspirators were never charged by the DOJ for drug trafficking or financial crimes, I am concerned that the DEA and DOJ during the first Trump Administration moved to terminate this investigation in order to protect pedophiles. I am also concerned that the excessive redactions of this memorandum for operation "Chain Reaction" go well beyond the intent of the Epstein Files Transparency Act, which allows for redactions to protect the identity of victims, not members of a criminal sex trafficking organization. Since this memorandum designated as "sensitive but unclassified" there is no reason to withhold an unredacted version of this document from the U.S. Congress.

In order to better understand the circumstances and handling of OCDETF operation "Chain Reaction", please provide the following information no later than March 13, 2026:

1. Please provide a fully unredacted copy of the May 18, 2015 memorandum prepared by the Director of the OCDETF Fusion center (OFC-TP-15-12392, SODOFC-15-12392, identified as EFTA00173953 in the DOJ's digital Epstein files library).
2. Why were Jeffrey Epstein and 14 of his associates under investigation by OCDETF? Were Epstein and his associates under investigation for illicit drug trafficking and/or money laundering?
3. According to the May 18, 2015 memorandum, "DEA reporting indicates the above individuals are involved in illegitimate wire transfers which are tied to illicit drug and/or prostitution activities occurring in the USVI and NYC". Please explain what the DEA meant here by "illicit drug activities". What types of illicit drugs were Epstein and his associates buying or selling as part of a potential criminal conspiracy?
4. When did OCDETF operation "Chain Reaction" (case number NY-NYS-0829) conclude? What was final result of operation "Chain Reaction"? Did the OCDETF or any other DOJ component recommend that Epstein and/or any of his 14 co-conspirators be charged with drug trafficking, money laundering or any other federal crimes that did not include sex or human trafficking?

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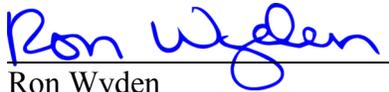
<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/newsletters/2025-11-07/reagan-era-crime-unit-officially-shut-down-by-doj>

5. Why were no federal drug trafficking or money laundering charges ever filed against Epstein or any of his co-conspirators as a result of Operation “Chain Reaction”?
6. Why are the names of the 14 other targets identified in the May 18, 2015 memorandum redacted? Please provide the legal basis under which the names of the other targets of Operation “Chain Reaction” are being withheld.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator  
Ranking Member, Committee  
on Finance