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June 10, 2025

Susan Wiles
White House Chief of Staff
Executive Office of the President
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Wiles:

I write to express my alarm regarding the inadequacy of background checks of presidential nominees conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). For almost 75 years, every nominee for a Senate confirmed position is subject to a background investigation by the FBI. It is critical that these investigations are thorough and rigorous in order to assist the Senate's constitutional obligation of "advice and consent," and to maintain the public's trust in leaders of the President's Administration.

I recently received a briefing on the background check the FBI conducted on Billy Long in conjunction with his nomination to be Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). I have serious concerns about his personal conduct and his suitability for the position he has been nominated, all of which stem from publicly reported information. These issues were not adequately investigated. In fact, the FBI's investigation, a process dictated by the White House, seemed designed to avoid substantively addressing any of these concerning public reports. It's almost as if the FBI is unable to read the newspaper.

Publicly available information raises very troubling questions of personal wrongdoing that merit serious and thorough investigation. According to court documents, Mr. Long is implicated in a bribery conspiracy involving a health care company located in his Missouri district while he was a member of Congress. The case resulted in convictions and guilty pleas of more than a dozen people, including elected officials, businessmen, and lobbyists. Long appears to be identified as U.S. Representative #1 in the guilty plea of Donald Andrew Jones, aka D.A. Jones, who was involved in a significant number of improper payments and bribes, and some of his interactions with Long were outlined in the plea.

Furthermore, public reporting raises serious questions about Mr. Long's experience in the tax industry. After serving in Congress, Mr. Long was paid to refer taxpayers to so-called "tribal tax credits" which the IRS has confirmed "do not exist." The IRS further noted that "promoters of

these credits may be subject to civil or criminal penalties.” Mr. Long was also heavily involved with promotion of the fraud-riddled Employee Retention Tax Credit.

Public reporting of Mr. Long’s personal financial ties to tax promoters also raises serious concerns. In December, after he was nominated by President Trump, Mr. Long’s defunct 2022 Senate campaign suddenly received over \$150,000 in donations from people associated with questionable tax products. Mr. Long then directly pocketed \$130,000 of those donations to pay off personal debts. Furthermore, in a recorded video, another tax promoter described making Mr. Long his personal guest at the inauguration, taking him to dinner, and in return receiving promises of favorable treatment for his tax products from Mr. Long.

Mr. Long’s public record is riddled with markings of corruption. A good-faith investigation by the FBI should include a thorough vetting of all publicly available information about a nominee to help determine their fitness for office. The Administration’s inadequate vetting process is either irresponsible or a deliberate whitewash of the nominee’s record. I urge the Administration to immediately institute suitable background investigations for all its nominees.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Finance