Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

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Ms. Burke:

On August 4, 2026, the Trump administration announced its intent to direct up to $150 million in federal funds to Burke Law Group, PLLC ("Burke Law Group" or "firm"), a Houston-based corporate and environmental litigation firm with no institutional experience in immigration law and no attorneys with documented experience representing unaccompanied children.[1] The firm's only apparent qualifications for this contract are deep financial and personal ties to the Trump administration, to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, and support for the current administration's ideological priorities. The Senate Finance Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform have a responsibility to understand why nearly $150 million in federal cooperative agreement funds were going to be directed to your firm and whether federal procurement rules were followed.

One week after the Trump administration announced its intent to direct up to $150 million to your firm, your firm publicly stated that it had been "approached by the Trump administration" about this work, but had now "decided not to apply for a grant or a contract" and "withdr[awn] from consideration."[2] Your firm's statements are difficult to reconcile with the Trump administration's decision to name Burke Law Group in the Federal Register. A Federal Register notice announcing the intent to award a single-source cooperative agreement identifies an actual selection decision, not an exploratory possibility. This notice disproves your firm's statements that it was merely "considering how it might help."[3] The administration published the Burke Law Group notice without a competitive solicitation, without any public discussion of the firm's qualifications, and without explanation of how a firm that had never before purported to be an

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[1] *Announcement of the Intent To Award a Single-Source Cooperative Agreement to Burke Law Group, PLLC in Houston, Texas*, 91 Fed. Reg. 50848 (Aug. 4, 2026), https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2026-16081.pdf?1785874509.

[2] BLG Tweets (@BurkeLawTweets), X (Aug. 11, 2026 4:28 PM ET), https://x.com/BurkeLawTweets/status/2087274988235637197?s=46.

[3] *Id.*

immigration practice came to be entrusted with the representation of over 20,000 children who have statutory protections under existing anti-trafficking laws.[4]

Burke Law Group describes itself on its LinkedIn as a "[f]ull service law firm serving the energy and infrastructure industries," with listed specialties in oil and gas, energy, environmental health and safety, antitrust, corporate and real estate, class action, trial advocacy, technology, board governance, administrative law, outside general counsel, and construction and infrastructure.[5] Immigration is not among those specialties. The firm's own website, prior to the August 4 public inspection notice, likewise made no reference to an immigration or asylum practice. An archived capture of the firm's website from August 2025 confirms that there was no immigration practice at that time.[6] Only after the public inspection notice was posted did an "Immigration & Asylum" practice page materialize on the firm's website.[7]

In addition, the attorneys who appear to support the Burke Law Group's new Immigration & Asylum practice do not seemingly have expertise in humanitarian-based petitions and immigration law or in the legal orientation, legal consultation, and attorney-of-record representation of unaccompanied children. The principal practice area for one appears to be employment-based immigration work for corporate employers.[8] The other describes her role at Burke Law Group as "manag[ing] complex regulatory compliance frameworks and ensur[ing] strict adherence to evolving federal immigration and welfare protocols."[9] The gap between what Burke Law Group does and the work the Trump administration announced your firm would perform raises a fundamental question: why was Burke Law Group approached to represent tens of thousands of children in specialized immigration proceedings at all?

The relationships and financial ties that surround Burke Law Group's business and litigation practice also raise concerns as to how the firm came to be named in the Federal Register as a single-source cooperative agreement awardee. You are yourself a former Trump appointee at the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior, and your firm represents Dr. Eithan Haim, who faced charges for leaking the sensitive medical records of transgender children from Texas Children's Hospital ("TCH").[10] Elon Musk is publicly funding this

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[4] 8 U.S.C. § 1232(c)(5).

[5] Burke Law Group PLLC, LinkedIn, https://www.linkedin.com/company/burke-law-group (last visited Aug. 10, 2026).

[6] *Our Team*, Burke Law Group, PLLC, *archived at* https://web.archive.org/web/20250820125841/https:/burkegroup.law/our-team/ (Aug. 20, 2025).

[7] *Immigration & Asylum*, Burke Law Group, PLLC, https://burkegroup.law/immigration-asylum/ (last visited Aug. 10, 2026).

[8] *Kyle Farmer*, Burke Law Group, PLLC, https://burkegroup.law/lawyer/kyle-farmer/ (last visited Aug. 10, 2026); Farmer Law PC, https://farmerlawpc.com/ (last visited Aug. 10, 2026).

[9] *Andrea LaParde*, Burke Law Group, PLLC, https://burkegroup.law/lawyer/andrea-laprade/ (last visited Aug. 10, 2026).

[10] Ted Hesson, *Trump-linked law firm to get $150 million no-bid contract to represent migrant children*, THE WASH. POST (Aug. 6, 2026), https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/08/06/trump-linked-law-firm-

representation.[11] In 2023, Governor Greg Abbott appointed you as one of four members of the Texas School Land Board, which manages the sale and leasing of thirteen million acres of state lands.[12] That public appointment placed you in ongoing coordination with the office of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, whose litigation posture on unaccompanied children has closely aligned with the Trump administration. A week before the Federal Register notice, you personally signed a settlement agreement with the Department of Justice ("DOJ") and TCH resolving matters in a separate case concerning pediatric gender-affirming care, placing you in direct dealings with DOJ leadership at the moment the administration was, according to public reporting, searching for new counsel to represent unaccompanied children.[13]

Burke Law Group was not an obvious candidate for that work by any conventional measure of expertise or scale, but between 2023 and 2025, your firm received funding from Alliance Defending Freedom for "religious liberty" and "family values," and financial assistance from We Won't Be Canceled—organizations that have publicly aligned themselves with the current administration's ideological priorities and whose funding decisions describe the ideological ecosystem in which your firm's litigation practice has operated.[14] We would like to understand how these facts relate to one another and the administration's decision to publicly name your firm as receiving federal funds to represent unaccompanied children.

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get-150- million-no-bid-contract-represent-migrant-children/; Christopher F. Rufo, *Sex-Change Procedures at Texas Children's Hospital,* CHRISTOPHERRUFO.COM (May 16, 2023), https://christopherrufo.com/p/sex-change-procedures-at-texas-childrens; Cameron Abrams, *Texas Children's Hospital Providing 'Gender-Affirming Care' in New Whistleblower Documents*, THE TEXAN (May 17, 2023), https://thetexan.news/issues/social-issues-life-family/texas-children-s-hospital-providing-gender-affirming-care-in-new-whistleblower-documents/article_63f7f4cd-cfe5-5104-a40c-69806381461f.html.

[11] Vivian Ho, *DOJ drops case against Texas doctor who shared transgender care data*, THE WASHINGTON POST (Jan. 25, 2025), https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/01/25/justice-drops-case-eithan-haim-doctor/; Mary Margaret Olohan, *Exclusive: Elon Musk Funds Suit Against Texas Children's for 'Malicious Prosecution' of Eithan Haim*, THE DAILY WIRE (Jan. 21, 2026), https://www.dailywire.com/news/exclusive-elon-musk-funds-suit-against-texas-childrens-for-malicious-prosecution-of-eithan-haim; Plaintiff's Original Petition, *Haim v. Texas Children's Hospital,* Cause No. 1-26-0018, (Tex. Dist. Ct. Rockwall Cnty. Jan. 5, 2026), https://media.eppc.org/2026/01/Haim-Original-Petition-2026.01.05.pdf.

[12] *Press Release: Governor Abbott Appoints Burke, Burciaga To School Land Board,* The Office of the Texas Governor Greg Abbott (March 9, 2023), https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-appoints-burke-burciaga-to-school-land-board.

[13] Settlement Agreement, *United States, ex rel. Sivadge v. Texas Children's Hospital, et al.* (July 27, 2026), https://www.justice.gov/d9/2026-08/tch_fca_settlement_agreement_7.27.26_fully_signed.pdf; Lomi Kriel, *Trump administration asks Texas for help providing legal services to immigrant kids facing deportation*, THE TEXAS TRIBUNE (July 3, 2026), https://www.texastribune.org/2026/07/03/trump-texas-doj-indigent-defense-unaccompanied-immigrant-children/.

[14] Alliance Defending Freedom, Form 990, Schedule I for Fiscal Year Ending June 2024, PROPUBLICA NONPROFIT EXPLORER, https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/541660459/202541289349304579/IRS990ScheduleI (last visited Aug. 10, 2026); Alliance Defending Freedom Form 990, Schedule I for Fiscal Year Ending June 2025, PROPUBLICA NONPROFIT EXPLORER, https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/541660459/202630989349300033/IRS990ScheduleI (last visited Aug. 10, 2026); We Won't Be Canceled, Form 990-PF for Fiscal Year Ending Dec. 2025, PROPUBLICA NONPROFIT EXPLORER, https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/931903854/202610409349100711/IRS990PF (last visited Aug. 10, 2026).

Since December 2025, the Trump administration has withheld more than $65 million in payments to the network of legal service providers that previously represented unaccompanied children.[15] The Trump administration withheld those funds for services already delivered, after the service providers declined to disclose privileged information about the children they represented.[16] On August 6, 2026, a federal court in the Northern District of California enjoined the practice, ordered the Trump administration to release the withheld funds by the following day, and expressly prohibited the government from conditioning payment "on receipt of any further information" from the affected providers.[17] The court rejected the government's characterization of the situation as an active "contract dispute," and observed that the government had failed to persuade the court that "it had a plan to represent vulnerable children."[18] One can expect that the Trump administration will continue to demand privileged client information as a condition of payment from any firm that takes on this work.

Congress designed a framework to protect unaccompanied children with the understanding that these children, many of whom have fled violence, exploitation, and trafficking, cannot navigate the U.S. immigration system alone. That framework requires competent counsel with actual experience representing unaccompanied children, and it requires that the federal dollars appropriated for this purpose are used to secure that representation, not routed to firms whose qualifications for the work have yet to be publicly established.

For your awareness, we are also engaged in ongoing correspondence with Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") leadership regarding the Office of Refugee Resettlement's ("ORR") administration of this program. This letter seeks information about Burke Law Group's role specifically and from your firm. Your candor is appreciated and expected. We request a meeting with you and Burke Law Group leadership at your earliest availability, and written responses to the following questions no later than **August 28, 2026**:

1. Please describe when Burke Law Group was first contacted by the Trump administration about the possibility of receiving federal funds to represent unaccompanied children. Please identify the individuals who initiated those communications and through what channels.

2. When Burke Law Group first learned of the administration's intent to name the firm in the Federal Register, what did the firm understand about the exact scope, terms, and funding level of the arrangement besides filling a gap in legal services? Did the terms include a written or unwritten requirement that the award was conditioned on the

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[15] Chiara Eisner, *More Than 25,000 Children Lose Previous Legal Protections, as Federal Contract Ends*, NPR (Aug. 1, 2026), https://www.npr.org/2026/08/01/nx-s1-5913679/immgirant-children-lawyers-trump-administration.
[16] *Id.*
[17] Order Granting Motion to Enforce Preliminary Injunction, *Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto v. HHS*, No. 4:25-cv-02847-AMO, ECF No. 172, 2-3 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 6, 2026).
[18] *Id.*

recipient providing privileged client information as a condition of payment? Who at ORR, the Administration for Children and Families ("ACF"), or HHS communicated the scope, terms, and funding information?

3. Your firm has publicly stated that it was "only considering applying for a small portion" of the $150 million award announced in the Federal Register. What amount was your firm actually considering, on what timeline, and on what terms? When and how was that amount communicated to the Trump administration, and by whom at ORR, ACF, or HHS was the $150 million figure ultimately decided upon and included in the notice?

4. Please describe when Burke Law Group first developed content on its website regarding immigration and asylum representation, when the firm first identified attorneys as handling immigration matters, and the timeline by which the firm developed the immigration and asylum practice area referenced in the public inspection and Federal Register notice. Please identify who directed and executed those changes and provide any internal communications regarding them.

5. Please provide all documents and communications between Burke Law Group personnel and any federal officials at HHS, ACF, ORR, DOJ, the Department of Homeland Security, or the White House regarding the ORR legal services award, unaccompanied children legal representation, the Federal Register notice, or any related subject between January 20, 2025 and the date of this letter.

6. Please provide all communications between Burke Law Group personnel and Attorney General Ken Paxton, his staff, or the Office of the Texas Attorney General regarding the ORR legal services award, unaccompanied children legal representation, or the Texas Indigent Defense Commission during the same period.

7. Please describe every communication between Burke Law Group and any third-party intermediary, including but not limited to Alliance Defending Freedom, We Won't Be Canceled, Elon Musk, entities affiliated with Musk, and any other funders of the firm's litigation matters regarding the ORR award.

8. Please describe the process by which Burke Law Group "decided not to apply for a grant or a contract" and "withdrew from consideration," as your firm's August 11 public statement indicates. When was that decision made? What factors informed it? To whom at the administration was the decision communicated, and when? Did the administration attempt to persuade the firm to remain in consideration, and if so, how, and when? Why did Burke Law Group correct the public record on August 11?

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. The Senate Finance Committee has broad oversight and investigatory authority under Senate Rules XXV and XXVI over federal programs and the utilization of

federal funding that supports the Unaccompanied Children Program. Your firm is uniquely positioned to answer the questions this letter raises, and your responses will inform the Committees' ongoing oversight of the Trump administration's use of federal funds Congress appropriated to protect unaccompanied children. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance

Robert Garcia
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform