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October 28, 2019

Mr. Peter Navarro
Assistant to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Navarro:

It is no secret that the Trump Administration is engaged in trade negotiations with China. What is a secret is what domestic political benefit the Administration is trying to obtain in those negotiations. On October 24, 2019, you attended the CITIZEN by CNN conference in New York where you were interviewed by Jim Sciutto as part of an event titled “China Trade Deal: Fact or Fiction.”¹ During the interview, Sciutto asked you several times if investigating the Bidens was brought up as part of trade negotiations with China. You refused to answer the question. You further stated the American people “don’t have a right to know” the answer.²

This interview follows an earlier interview with Sciutto on the same topic. On October 4, 2019, Sciutto asked you several times if you ever “raised investigating Joe Biden with China during trade negotiations.”³ You refused to answer and instead criticized reporting on the matter as “fake news.”

In fact, there is every reason to believe that the Administration is seeking to link advancement on a trade deal with advancement of its own domestic political agenda. Speaking to reporters at the White House on October 3, 2019, President Trump told reporters “China should start an investigation into the Bidens because what happened in China is just about as bad as what happened with Ukraine,” referencing the unsubstantiated allegations of wrongdoing by Joe and Hunter Biden in the Ukraine.⁴ Several days later, Michael Pillsbury, an informal White House adviser on China, told the Financial Times that he had gotten “quite a bit of background on Hunter Biden from the Chinese” on a recent visit to Beijing.⁵

¹ <https://twitter.com/jimsciutto/status/1187335097558667264>

² <https://twitter.com/oliverdarcy/status/1187384677520117760>;
<https://twitter.com/jimsciutto/status/1187367812240678912>

³ <https://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2019/10/04/peter-navarro-trump-joe-biden-sciutto-nr-vpx.cnn>

⁴ <https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/03/politics/donald-trump-ukraine-china-investigate-2020/index.html>

⁵ Demetri Sevastopulo, “Trump Adviser Says China Provided Information About Hunger Biden,” Financial Times, Oct. 10, 2019; <https://amp.ft.com/content/d4b9b0a8-eb14-11e9-a240-3b065ef5fc55>;
<https://twitter.com/Dimi/status/1182295578128064513?s=20>.

Contrary to your assertions, the American people have every right to know if negotiators are using United States' trade policy to advance President Trump's personal and political interests.

As Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, I have a constitutional obligation to conduct oversight of matters related to trade agreements and the settlement of trade litigation. To assist my oversight of this matter, please provide answers to the following questions by November 8, 2019.

1. Did you ever discuss an existing or proposed investigation of Vice President or Hunter Biden as a part of ongoing trade negotiations with China with any Chinese official or Chinese national?
2. Did you ever discuss an existing or proposed investigation of any of President Trump's political opponents as a part of ongoing trade negotiations with China with any Chinese official or Chinese national?
3. Are you aware of any discussions by the President, trade negotiators, or any other Administration officials or their agents, formal or informal, concerning investigations of Vice President or Hunter Biden as part of ongoing trade negotiations with China?
4. Are you aware of any discussions by the President, trade negotiators, or any other Administration officials or their agents concerning investigations of any of President Trump's political opponents as part of ongoing trade negotiations with China?
5. Did you ever discuss any issues related to the personal financial benefit of President Trump or his family as a part of ongoing trade negotiations with China with any Chinese official or Chinese national?
6. Are you aware of any discussions by the President, trade negotiators, or any other Administration officials or their agents, formal or informal, concerning the personal financial benefit of President Trump or his family as part of ongoing trade negotiations with China?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Ranking Member