

January 28, 2021

Dr. Amy Gutmann
President
University of Pennsylvania
1 College Hall, Room 100
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Dr. Gutmann:

On August 3, 2020, we wrote to you regarding unreported and anonymous foreign donations to the University of Pennsylvania from foreign adversaries such as Russia, China, Qatar, and Iran.¹ We have yet to receive a response. In light of your university's close relationship with the Biden family and recent revelations regarding their potentially illicit ties to foreign adversaries including China, we request an immediate response to this inquiry.²

On December 9, 2020, both Hunter Biden and the Biden-Harris Transition Team admitted that Hunter Biden was under federal investigation for his "tax affairs."³ Reporting indicates the criminal investigation's primary focus is whether Hunter Biden violated tax and money laundering laws in his foreign business dealings, particularly in China.⁴ Notwithstanding significant counterintelligence concerns, these facts raise serious questions regarding conflicts of interest and the integrity of the Biden family's ties to China. Understanding whether the University of Pennsylvania's Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement (Biden Center) received funds from China or other adversarial nations at the behest of the Biden family or future Biden Administration officials will shed light on the depth and breadth of the potential improper influence these nations enjoy over the Biden family.

On February 1, 2017, University of Pennsylvania announced the formation of the Biden Center.⁵ In the 37 months of available reporting prior to the announcement of the Biden Center,

¹ Letter to Amy Gutmann, President, University of P.A., from James Comer, et. al., Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Aug. 3, 2020).

² Jon Levine & Mary Kay Linge, *Hunter Biden and China: A timeline of his business ties to the Far East*, N.Y. POST (Dec. 19, 2020), <https://nypost.com/article/hunter-biden-china-timeline-business-ties/>.

³ Press Release, Biden-Harris Transition, Statements by Hunter Biden and the Biden-Harris Transition Team (Dec. 9, 2020), <https://buildbackbetter.gov/press-releases/statements-by-hunter-biden-and-the-biden-harris-transition-team/>.

⁴ Evan Perez & Pamela Brown, *Federal criminal investigation into Hunter Biden focuses on his business dealings in China*, CNN (Dec. 10, 2020), <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/09/politics/hunter-biden-tax-investigation/index.html>.

⁵ *Vice President Joe Biden to lead the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement*, PENNTODAY (Feb. 1, 2017), <https://penntoday.upenn.edu/spotlights/vice-president-joe-biden-lead-penn-biden-center-diplomacy-and-global-engagement>.

the University received about \$21,187,333 from China.⁶ In contrast, in the 39 months of available reporting since the announcement of the Biden Center, the University received \$72,274,675 from China—an increase of \$51,087,342 in a similar time frame.⁷

For some time, we have been concerned about the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) efforts to use its strategic investments to turn American college campuses into indoctrination platforms for American students.⁸ In fact, Liu Yunshan, the former Head of Central Propaganda Department of China, pointed to the proliferation of CCP infiltration of U.S. education as part of a plan to “coordinate the efforts of overseas and domestic propaganda, [and] further create a favorable international environment for [China].”⁹ At the very least, increased CCP influence in the U.S. allows a window into U.S. culture, infrastructure, and planning—providing a gathering ground for Chinese intelligence agencies.

The CCP's actions calls into question whether U.S. institutes of higher education receiving federal taxpayer dollars should be allowed to accept funds from China, the CCP, or other affiliated organizations.

To help us better understand the depth and breadth of foreign influence and investment in U.S. higher education, as well as the University of Pennsylvania's and the Biden Center's ties to China, please provide the following information as soon as possible, but by no later than February 11, 2021:

1. All unredacted records of gifts from, contracts or agreements with, and restricted or conditional gifts from or contracts with the Chinese government, the Communist Party of China, or any affiliated organizations, any Chinese national, or any businesses primarily located in China, for the period of January 1, 2013, to the present.
2. All information, documents, and communications between and among the University of Pennsylvania, any of its current or former employees or affiliates, and any of the parties included in request 1 for the period of January 1, 2013, to the present. Custodians include but are not limited to:
 - a. Mr. Joe Biden, former Benjamin Franklin Presidential Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania;
 - b. Mr. Antony Blinken, former Managing Director of the University of Pennsylvania's Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement;

⁶ Section 117 of the Higher Education Act – Public Records, Foreign Funding Disclosure Reports (through Sept. 23, 2020), *available at* <https://sites.ed.gov/foreigngifts/>; Data compiled by the U.S. Dep't of Educ. and analyzed by Comm. Staff.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Letter to Betsy D. DeVos, Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Educ, from Jim D. Jordan, et. al., Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (May 4, 2020).

⁹ Ethan Epstein, *How China Infiltrated U.S. Classrooms*, POLITICO (Jan. 16, 2018), <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/16/how-china-infiltrated-us-classrooms-216327>.

Dr. Amy Gutmann

January 28, 2021

Page 3

- c. Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, Vice Provost for Global Initiatives at the University of Pennsylvania;
- d. Mr. Michael Carpenter, Managing Director of the University of Pennsylvania's Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement; and
- e. Dr. Amy Gutmann, President of the University of Pennsylvania.

In addition to these documents, please provide a staff-level briefing no later than February 4, 2021. This briefing may be conducted remotely for convenience and safety issues. To schedule the briefing or ask any follow-up or related questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform staff at (202) 225-5074.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. The Committee on the Judiciary has jurisdiction pursuant to House Rule X over espionage, immigration policy and enforcement, and subversive activities affecting the security of the United States. The Committee on Education and Labor has jurisdiction over Section 117 of the Higher Education Act. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,

James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform

Jim Jordan
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

Virginia Foxx
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and Labor

cc: The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney, Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Robert C. Scott, Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor