

September 4, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

I am writing to request information regarding recent reports that Vice President Mike Pence patronized President Donald Trump's Trump International Golf Links & Hotel Doonbeg while in Ireland – at the “suggestion” of the President.¹ This transaction – another example of what appears to be open corruption in this administration – deepens my concerns about the ongoing ethics issues related to the President's continued financial relationship with the Trump Organization and the abuse of taxpayer funds to enrich the President and his family through their business interests.

During his two-day visit in Ireland earlier this week, Vice President Pence stayed at the Trump International Hotel in Doonbeg and “[flew] the hour-or-so into Dublin [on the other side of Ireland] for official meetings,” rather than staying at a hotel in Dublin a short drive away.² The Vice President's chief of staff indicated that the President encouraged the Vice President to stay at his hotel, telling him, “[Y]ou should stay at my place.”³ The Vice President's decision to trek across country is “clearly not convenient. It's clearly not efficient. There's really no explanation besides promoting the President.”⁴

This is only the latest instance in which government officials, companies or special interest groups have patronized the President's hotels – enriching the President and his family – in numerous cases, with taxpayer funds. Just two months ago, Attorney General William Barr “booked President Trump's D.C. hotel for a 200 person holiday party in December that is likely

¹ Associated Press, “Pence defends decision to stay at Trump property in Ireland,” Jill Colvin, September 3, 2019, <https://www.apnews.com/0604821ef5cb478eb0eaaa0212bb5fcd>.

² *Id.*

³ NBC News, “Trump made 'suggestion' Pence stay at president's Irish golf club, VP's chief of staff says,” Allan Smith, September 3, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-made-suggestion-pence-stay-president-s-irish-golf-club-n1049026>.

⁴ Washington Post, “Pence Defends Stay at Trump Resort in Ireland,” Catherine Lucey, Updated September 3, 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/pence-aide-defends-vice-presidents-stay-at-trump-property-in-ireland-11567514416>.

to deliver Trump's business more than \$30,000 in revenue."⁵ Last year, T-Mobile executives started to patronize President Trump's hotel in Washington, D.C. immediately after announcing a proposed merger with Sprint, raising questions about whether the company was attempting to curry favor with the Administration through the Trump Organization.⁶ When the President travelled to Scotland last year – he stayed at one of his luxury golf resorts, made no public appearances, played golf, and cost the American taxpayers over \$68,000.⁷ In fact, a review published by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington identified at least 350 trips the President has taken to his own properties –costing taxpayers an estimated \$105 million.⁸

These expenditure are deeply troubling because President Trump has refused to fully divest from his interests in the Trump Organization. The revocable trust the President established can “‘distribute net income or principal to Donald J. Trump at his request’ or whenever his son and longtime attorney ‘deem appropriate.’ That can include everything from profits to the underlying assets,” which means that the taxpayer money spent by Vice President Pence and his staff ultimately end up in the pockets of the President.⁹

The recent reports surrounding Vice President Pence's decision to patronize the Trump International Hotel in Doonbeg, Ireland – and the extent to which the President could potentially benefit financially from the taxpayer expenditures on this visit – are disturbing. I have introduced legislation, the *Anti-Corruption and Public Integrity Act*, which would require the President and Vice President to place conflicted assets, including businesses, into a blind trust to be sold off. I intend to keep working to make that plan law. In the meantime, to address these concerns, I ask that you provide answers to the following questions by September 18, 2019.

1. What was the total travel cost associated with the Vice President's trip to Doonbeg, Ireland? Specifically, what was the excess cost associated with the Vice President staying at Doonbeg rather than in Dublin?
2. Which State Department officials were responsible for approving lodging and travel plans for the Vice President and his team in Ireland? Did State Department or White House ethics officials review these plans?

⁵ Washington Post, “Barr books Trump's hotel for \$30,000 holiday party,” Jonathan O'Connell and David A. Fahrenthold, August 27, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/08/27/cheers-barr-books-trumps-hotel-holiday-party/>.

⁶ Washington Post, “T-Mobile announced a merger needing Trump administration approval. The next day, 9 executives had reservations at Trump's hotel.,” Jonathan O'Connell and David A. Fahrenthold, January 16, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/a-place-i-feel-very-comfortable-t-mobile-executives-seeking-government-approval-for-merger-stayed-at-trumps-hotel-repeatedly/2019/01/15/6a114d3e-142c-11e9-b6ad-9cfd62dbb0a8_story.html.

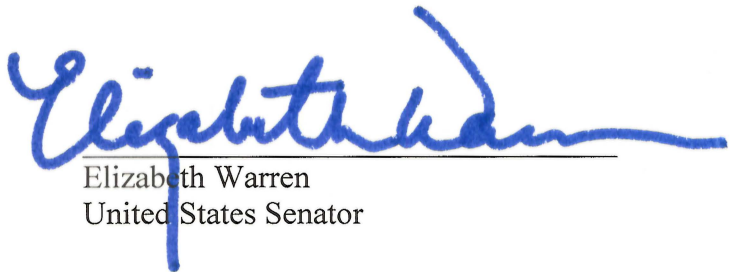
⁷ Washington Post, “Report: Trump's stay at his Scotland resort cost \$68,800,” David Fahrenthold and Drew Harwell, July 17, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/report-trumps-stay-at-his-scotland-resort-cost-68800/2018/07/17/4fce3e28-89ee-11e8-8aea-86e88ae760d8_story.html.

⁸ Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, “The Case for a Trump Impeachment Inquiry,” <https://www.citizensforethics.org/case-impeachment-inquiry-trump/>; Forbes, “Trump's Golf Trips Could Cost Taxpayers Over \$340 Million,” Chuck Jones, July 10, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chuckjones/2019/07/10/trumps-golf-trips-could-cost-taxpayers-over-340-million/#75a5366528aa>.

⁹ ProPublica, “Trump Lawyer Confirms President Can Pull Money From His Businesses Whenever He Wants,” Derek Kravitz and Al Shaw, April 4, 2017, <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-pull-money-his-businesses-when-ever-he-wants-without-telling-us>.

3. According to the Vice President's chief of staff, President Trump made a "suggestion" to the Vice President that he should stay at the Trump International Hotel in Doonbeg while in Ireland.
 - a. Was the State Department aware of this "suggestion" when planning the Vice President's travels?
 - b. Did this "suggestion" factor into the decision making process for where the Vice President and his team would stay while in Ireland?
4. Please provide copies of all email or other communication between State Department officials and the Office of the Vice President or any other White House official related to the planning of the Vice President's and his teams stay in Doonbeg, Ireland.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator