

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 23, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin:

We write again regarding our concerns about misconduct at the highest level of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), this time at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On March 18, 2026, we wrote to the then Secretary of Homeland Security about Mr. Corey Lewandowski's outsized and undue influence over the Department as a special government employee (SGE).¹ In particular, we expressed our grave concerns with Mr. Lewandowski's alleged unauthorized involvement in DHS contracting decisions. Additional information has since come to light describing how Mr. Lewandowski exercised influence over decisions at FEMA through a contractor, Ms. Kara Voorhies, who appears to have been paid an exorbitant salary while unlawfully undermining FEMA's ability to help Americans in their hour of need.

On March 28, 2026, The Wall Street Journal reported that Mr. Lewandowski installed Ms. Voorhies at FEMA as a contractor with an unclear role, for which she allegedly received \$19,000 a week pursuant to a contract FEMA officials reportedly cannot locate.² That amounts to \$1 million a year and far surpasses the salary of any Federal government employee, including the President of the United States.³ While at FEMA, Ms. Voorhies's involvement in spending decisions and bypassing normal processes to push for the award of contracts to specific businesses alarmed colleagues.⁴

On March 31, 2026, Ms. Karen Evans, the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the FEMA Administrator, was deposed.⁵ Ms. Evans revealed that while Ms. Voorhies was at FEMA, she would talk to then Secretary Noem and Mr. Lewandowski about FEMA issues and Ms. Evans copied Ms. Voorhies on all communications to DHS Headquarters, including those related to FEMA staffing.⁶ Ms. Evans also confirmed that Ms. Voorhies was responsible for implementing Secretary Noem's policy of reviewing all contracts and grants over \$100,000.⁷

¹ Letter from Ranking Member Robert Garcia, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, et al. to Office of the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (Mar. 18, 2026), https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/imo/media/doc/joint_letter_to_dhs_os_re_noem_lewandowski.pdf.

² Tarini Parti, Josh Dawsey, and Michelle Hackman, *Investigators Examine Contractor Installed at FEMA Under Kristi Noem*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (Mar. 28, 2026), <https://www.wsj.com/politics/national-security/investigators-examine-contractor-installed-at-fema-under-kristi-noem-f6f0029d>.

³ See 3 U.S.C. § 102.

⁴ *Supra* note 2.

⁵ Karen Evans Dep. 36:1-16, Mar. 31, 2026.

⁶ Evans Dep., *supra* note 5, at 35:7-16.

⁷ Evans Dep., *supra* note 5, at 26:1-9.

On April 7, 2026, The Washington Post reported further details about Ms. Voorhies' role at FEMA which started last spring despite having no prior emergency management experience.⁸ Ms. Voorhies developed processes to review every FEMA grant and contract.⁹ This gave her the power to not only influence the award of contracts and grants, but also to punish entities. For example, she blocked Muslim groups from receiving security grants and worked with Mr. Lewandowski to deny grants to California.¹⁰ Decisions on how to award grants should never be based on politics or bigotry.

Federal law prohibits government contractors from performing work that is characterized as "inherently governmental functions."¹¹ Such functions include "awarding contracts," "terminating contracts," and "direction and control of Federal employees."¹² It appears that like Mr. Lewandowski, Ms. Voorhies was corruptly profiting from a position that gave her an outsized and undue influence over decision-making at FEMA.

Among the unanswered requests in our March 18 letter, we requested "[a]ll communications, including social media messages, Signal chats, and other official and personal communications, between Mr. Lewandowski and all employees, contractors, and advisors of DHS and component agencies regarding DHS personnel decisions, contracting decisions, and other DHS operations." We expect the response to that request to include any and all relevant communications between Mr. Lewandowski and Ms. Voorhies.

We request that you immediately respond to the requests in our March 18, 2026, letter, all of which remain unanswered. Additionally, we request the following by May 7, 2026:

1. All documents and communications concerning Ms. Voorhies's involvement in FEMA personnel decisions, contracting decisions, and other FEMA operations, including routing sheets bearing her name or title and policies concerning routing requests through Ms. Voorhies;
2. All communications, including social media messages, Signal chats, and other official and personal communications, between Ms. Voorhies and any FEMA employee, including Ms. Karen Evans; FEMA contractor; or advisor of DHS regarding FEMA personnel decisions, contracting decisions, and other FEMA operations; and
3. All documents and communications concerning Ms. Voorhies's hiring as a contractor, placement at FEMA, roles and responsibilities, and compensation.

The Committee on Homeland Security is the principal committee of the House of Representatives with jurisdiction for overall homeland security policy and has special oversight functions of "all

⁸ Brianna Sacks, Maria Sacchetti and Marianne LeVine, *What spending probes at DHS reveal about Kristi Noem's time in office*, THE WASHINGTON POST (Apr. 7, 2026),

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2026/04/05/noem-trump-dhs-fema-contracts/>.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ 48 C.F.R. § 7.500 (2026).

¹² *See* 48 C.F.R. § 7.503 (2026).

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Government activities relating to homeland security, including the interaction of all departments and agencies with the Department of Homeland Security” under House Rule X.

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 Committee on Oversight and Government Reform also has legislative jurisdiction over the overall economy, efficiency, and management of government operations and activities, including federal procurement.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, under House Rule X, has jurisdiction over multiple DHS mission areas—including the Coast Guard and federal management of emergencies and natural disasters.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security



Robert Garcia
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform



Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

cc: The Honorable Andrew Garbarino, Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable James Comer, Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Sam Graves, Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure