

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

March 3, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio,

On February 13, 2025, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (“the Subcommittee”) wrote to you concerning the State Department’s apparent intent to use \$400 million in taxpayer dollars to purchase armored versions of Elon Musk’s troubled Tesla Cybertruck.¹ As the Subcommittee’s letter detailed, the decision to consider purchasing Tesla vehicles for this purpose highlights the obvious conflicts of interest inherent in Mr. Musk’s dual roles as the Chief Executive Office of Tesla, Inc. and the practical head of the Department of Government Efficiency (“DOGE”).² This concern was exacerbated by the fact that the vehicle in question was a Tesla Cybertruck, a failed experiment of a car which has been subject to numerous recalls since its announcement, and would not reasonably be considered for this purpose absent a heavy thumb on the scale.³ The Subcommittee’s letter asked that the State Department provide certain information to assist its understanding of this intended purchase and what steps the State Department has taken to address Mr. Musk’s glaring conflicts of interest by February 21, 2025.⁴

While the State Department failed to respond to the Subcommittee’s letter by February 21, 2025, and I hope it will do so immediately, the State Department has publicly stated that the contract was planned during the Biden Administration and that the Trump Administration canceled it. Recent reporting seems to contradict this account. This reporting has detailed that the Biden administration planned to spend at most *thousands* of dollars researching the use of electric

¹ Letter from the Hon. Richard Blumenthal, Ranking Member, Permanent Subcomm. on Investigations to the Honorable Marco Rubio, Secretary of State (Feb. 13, 2025), <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025-02-13-Letter-from-Blumenthal-to-Secretary-Rubio.pdf>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

vehicles for the transportation of diplomats.⁵ It has also revealed that the document detailing the intent to spend \$400 million on Tesla Cybertrucks is dated December 2024 but does not appear on the State Department's website in that month in any form.⁶

As a result of these publicly reported events, the question has been raised whether, after significant public blowback, the Trump Administration created and backdated government documents to make it appear that the idea to spend \$400 million in taxpayer money on Tesla Cybertrucks originated with the previous administration. If that occurred, the Trump Administration not only recognizes the tremendous conflicts of interest inherent in Mr. Musk's dual roles, but is also taking active steps to hide the fact that it is ensuring that Mr. Musk's position is benefitting his companies.

On February 25, 2025, I sent a second set of letters to Mr. Musk's business interests asking that they answer basic questions about how they are managing Mr. Musk's glaring conflicts of interests.⁷ I similarly reiterate my request that you provide the information and documents outlined in my February 13, 2025 letter, to assist the Subcommittee's understanding of the State Department's decision to consider purchasing \$400 million in Cybertrucks and what steps the State Department has taken to address Mr. Musk's glaring conflicts of interest. Please provide the information and documents requested to the Subcommittee by March 10, 2025.

Given the recent reporting mentioned above, please also provide the Subcommittee with the following information by March 10, 2025:

1. When was the document concerning the procurement of "armored electric vehicles", or "armored Teslas," dated December 2024, created?⁸
2. Who was responsible for creating it?
3. Was this document altered or otherwise modified in January or February 2025?
 - a. Please provide the dates upon which any alterations were made and approved.
 - b. Please list the names and titles of any individuals responsible for the modification or alteration of the document.
4. Were you informed of the facts regarding the creation or alteration of this document in January or February 2025?
 - a. Please provide the date upon which you were provided any details regarding the creation or modification of the document, and a summary of what you were made aware of.

⁵ See Bobby Allyn, *A new document undercuts Trump admin's denials about \$400 million Tesla deal*, NPR (Feb. 24, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/24/nx-s1-5305269/tesla-state-department-elon-musk-trump>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ See Press Release, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, *Blumenthal Hits Back at Musk Companies for Failing to Manage DOGE Leader's Glaring Conflicts of Interest* (Feb. 25, 2025), <https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/blumenthal-hits-back-at-musk-companies-for-failing-to-manage-doge-leaders-glaring-conflicts-of-interest>.

⁸ See Allyn, *supra* note 5, which includes screenshots of the various versions of this document.

Please also provide the Subcommittee with the following documents by March 10, 2025:

1. All versions of the procurement document listing “armored electronic vehicles” or “armored Teslas,” including any associated metadata.

Please contact the Subcommittee should you have any questions about responding to these requests. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman