

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 24, 2026

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C., 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hegseth,

We write to follow up on our January 22, 2026 letter regarding the Department of Defense’s (DoD) contracting process and our concerns about potential conflicts of interest and corruption related to the DoD’s awards of contracts and loan guarantees to companies associated with Donald Trump, Jr., the President’s son.¹

On March 10, 2026, the Department of Defense provided a response to that letter.² This response was deeply concerning. It failed to provide answers to the vast majority of questions that we asked regarding DoD’s decision making process for the contracts and loan guarantees referenced in our January 22, 2026 letter. It also suggests that DoD appears to have no effective processes in place to ensure that DoD contracts are being fairly awarded to companies based on our national security and defense requirements—rather than the financial interests of the President’s family. Specifically, the letter indicated that:

“The primary method for mitigating such conflicts of interest is through the diligent collection and review of financial disclosure forms for employees...In addition, the Department goes beyond the minimum regulatory review requirements by mandating that DoW supervisors provide an additional review to identify any potential nexus between the [OSC professional staff’s] official duties and the interests listed in the financial disclosure form.”³

This answer indicates that DoD appears to be oblivious to – and therefore unable to address – the potential for corruption created by the Trump family’s investments in companies that stand to benefit financially from taxpayer-funded, DoD contracts. Donald Trump Jr. himself alluded to the specific mechanism of potential corruption last year, indicating that at his investment firm, “[w]e understand what the administration wants to do, because we helped craft some of that

¹ U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, “Warren, Blumenthal, Kim Sound Alarm on Potential for Donald Trump Jr.-Linked Companies to Profit Off Department of Defense Contract Awards, Loans,” press release, January 23, 2026, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/warren-blumenthal-kim-sound-alarm-on-potential-for-donald-trump-jr-linked-companies-to-profit-off-department-of-defense-contract-awards-loans>.

² On file with Office of Senator Elizabeth Warren.

³ *Id.*

messaging,”⁴ and that he had influence over picks for DoD personnel, looking “for candidates who wanted to spend more on drones.”⁵

In these cases, the mechanism of potential corruption is not at all related to DoD contracting employees’ financial investments: as detailed in the letter we sent in January, that mechanism involves the President or his family having inside information or influence over DoD policies and plans, and potential political favoritism by DoD officials who want to be in the good graces of the President or his family. DoD appears not to recognize this avenue of corruption, and your response to our letter indicated that the Department has no controls in place to prevent it.

These failures grow more concerning by the day, especially in the wake of new reports of Eric Trump’s and Donald Trump Jr.’s investments in a new drone company, Powerus.⁶

On March 9, 2026, reports revealed that the President’s sons are backing drone company Powerus, “that is vying to meet fresh demand from the Pentagon and fill a hole left by the administration’s ban on new Chinese drones in the U.S.”⁷ Powerus is also merging with Trump-backed golf-course company, Aureus Greenway Holdings Inc. (AGH), to form Powerus Corporation.⁸ The rationale for combining a battlefield drone company with a golf course company is unclear: when asked about why Powerus picked a Trump company to merge with rather than other publicly traded companies, the cofounder of Powerus stated that he “was not a finance specialist and didn’t know.”⁹ In a press release, AGH and Powerus described the Trump brothers as “notable investors of [the] combined company,” and asserted that the merger will “advance[s] American domination of drone industry and autonomous systems innovation.”¹⁰

Other investors backing the AGH-Powerus merger include American Ventures, one of the Trumps family’s investment vehicles, and Unusual Machines, a drone company in which Trump Jr. is a board member and shareholder, and that we raised concerns about in our January letter.¹¹

⁴ The New York Times, “Donald Trump Jr. Pitches ‘Patriotic Capitalism’ at Saudi Summit,” Kate Kelly, October 29, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/29/business/donald-trump-jr-1789-capital-saudi-arabia.html>.

⁵ Popular Information, “UPDATE: Trump Jr.-backed startup receives \$620 million Pentagon loan,” Rebecca Crosby and Noel Sims, December 4, 2025, https://popular.info/p/update-trump-jr-backed-startup-receives/?r=bgo2&utm_medium=ios&triedRedirect=true.

⁶ The Wall Street Journal, “Trump Sons Back New Drone Company Targeting Pentagon Sales,” Heather Somerville, March 9, 2026, https://www.wsj.com/politics/national-security/trump-sons-back-new-drone-company-targeting-pentagon-sales-2f74abca?mod=hp_lead_pos2.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ The Hill, “Drone company listing Trump sons as investors merges with ‘gold course operator,’” Sarah Davis, March 10, 2026, <https://thehill.com/policy/technology/5776607-drone-company-agh-golf-course-operator-merge/>.

⁹ Military.com, “New Drone Maker Partly Owned by Trump Sons Hopes to win Pentagon Contracts,” Bernard Condon, March 12, 2026, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2026/03/12/new-drone-maker-partly-owned-trump-sons-hopes-win-pentagon-contracts.html>.

¹⁰ “New American Drone and Defense Company to be Created Through merger of Powerus and Aureus Greenway Holdings,” press release, March 9, 2026, <https://feeds.issuedirect.com/news-release.html?newsid=8321984292103430&symbol=DOMH>.

¹¹ The Wall Street Journal, “Trump Sons Back New Drone Company Targeting Pentagon Sales,” Heather Somerville, March 9, 2026, https://www.wsj.com/politics/national-security/trump-sons-back-new-drone-company-targeting-pentagon-sales-2f74abca?mod=hp_lead_pos2; U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, “Warren, Blumenthal, Kim Sound Alarm on Potential for Donald Trump Jr.-Linked Companies to Profit Off Department of Defense Contract Awards, Loans,” press release, January 23, 2026, <https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/warren-blumenthal-kim-sound-alarm-on-potential-for-donald-trump-jr-linked-companies-to-profit-off-department-of->

Additionally, investment back Dominari Securities, also backed by the Trump brothers, is involved in the AGH-Powerus transaction.¹²

The AGH-Powerus reverse merger will provide Powerus access to public markets to allow the drone company to scale manufacturing to attempt to build more than 10,000 drones each month,¹³ “bring[ing] deeper involvement by the Trump family deeper into a multibillion-dollar sector that has new opportunities for growth following changes imposed by the Trump administration.”¹⁴ Reshoring U.S. supply chains is vital to national security, and the administration’s war in Iran reveals the extent to which drones are becoming an increasingly important battlefield weapon.¹⁵ But the circumstances surrounding this new merger, and the involvement of the President’s children cast a cloud of corruption and conflict of interest over any DoD contracts that this company may receive. As one ethics expert noted, “[i]t’s corruption,” and “[g]overnment decision makers will feel pressure to use contract awards to enrich the president’s family.”¹⁶ This cloud grows larger and darker with the realization that DoD appears to have ineffective controls in place to prevent undue political influence or conflicts of interest from affecting contracting decisions that may involve AGH-Powerus.

We have held longstanding concerns about DoD’s contracting process and its risks to national security and taxpayer dollars, and these concerns grow deeper by the day. To address these concerns, we request answers to the questions posed in our January 22, 2026, letter, in addition to the following questions by April 7, 2026:

1. To date, has Powerus won a DoD award?
2. If so, please provide a list of each DoD contract awarded to Powerus.
 - a. Was the award process for each contract awarded to Powerus Aerospace a competitive process?
 - b. If so, what were the criteria used to determine which company would receive a DoD contract?
 - c. How many companies competed for each DoD contract awarded to Powerus?
 - d. Was Powerus the highest rated competitor for each contract?
 - e. If not, which company was rated higher, and why did they receive the contract?
3. Has DoD had any conversations with Powerus regarding the production of drones or DoD’s drone production goals?
 - a. If conversations between Secretary Hegseth or his representatives and Powerus, Donald Trump Jr., Eric Trump, or their representatives occurred, please detail the date[s] and content[s] of the conversations[s] and who else participated.

defense-contract-awards-loans.

¹² The Wall Street Journal, “Trump Sons Back New Drone Company Targeting Pentagon Sales,” Heather Somerville, March 9, 2026, https://www.wsj.com/politics/national-security/trump-sons-back-new-drone-company-targeting-pentagon-sales-2f74abca?mod=hp_lead_pos2.

¹³ *Id.*

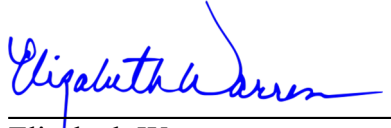
¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ Center for Strategic and International Studies, “Unpacking Iran’s Drone Campaign in the Gulf: Early Lessons for Future Drone Warfare,” Kateryna Bondar, March 10, 2026, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/unpacking-irans-drone-campaign-gulf-early-lessons-future-drone-warfare>.

¹⁶ Military.com, “New Drone Maker Partly Owned by Trump Sons Hopes to win Pentagon Contracts,” Bernard Condon, March 12, 2026, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2026/03/12/new-drone-maker-partly-owned-trump-sons-hopes-win-pentagon-contracts.html>.

4. What guardrails does DoD have in place to mitigate potential conflicts of interest of the President and his family from affecting DoD's contracting decisions?

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator