

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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January 27, 2020

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney:

We write to request that you join us in seeking transcribed interviews as part of the Committee's ongoing examination of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board's ethics investigation into then-WMATA Board Chair and District of Columbia (D.C.) Councilmember Jack Evans. On July 16, 2019, we wrote to WMATA requesting documents relating to its investigation of Evans.¹ The Committee has received over 900 pages of documents in response to our request.

These documents suggest that Evans abused his position as WMATA Board Chair to benefit his personal consulting clients. The documents also suggest that Evans and Corbett Price, who served until last year on the WMATA Board, may have sought to obstruct the WMATA Board's investigation into Evans and conceal the results. Evans and Price allegedly threatened WMATA staff and officials in an effort to advance their scheme. Democrat Committee leadership described the documents received thus far as presenting "a disturbing picture of Mr. Evans's ethical transgressions."²

On September 10, 2019, we wrote to Committee Democrats requesting that they schedule transcribed interviews with several individuals involved in the WMATA Board's ethics investigation into Evans.³ We received no response to our request. On September 16, 2019, we asked Democrats to invite Evans, then a sitting D.C. Councilmember, to testify at a Committee

¹ See Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Mark Meadows, Ranking Member, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to Paul Smedberg, Chair, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Jul. 16, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

² See, e.g., Letter from Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to The Honorable Geoffrey Cherrington, Inspector General, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Sept. 12, 2019).

³ See Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Mark Meadows, Ranking Member, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform (Sept. 10, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

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hearing about D.C. statehood.⁴ Democrats denied this request.⁵ At the hearing, we made a motion to subpoena Evans for testimony.⁶ Democrats rejected this motion.⁷

Because of the serious need for substantive oversight of WMATA and the D.C. government and Democrats' refusal to conduct this oversight, we exercised one of our few remaining procedural rights to request a hearing with witnesses selected by the minority.⁸ In response, Democrats sought to prevent meaningful oversight of this matter. You scheduled the minority day hearing with only a brief staff consultation and in the invitation letters to witnesses, you misrepresented the purpose of their testimony. In light of these facts, it was not a surprise that witnesses declined to appear. Our minority day hearing request is therefore still outstanding.

At a recent hearing, you asserted that "it is not up to [you]" to obtain witness testimony from people with knowledge of Evans's ethical transgressions.⁹ We respectfully disagree. As the Chairwoman of the Committee with jurisdiction over interstate compacts and D.C., you have an obligation to investigate credible allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse at WMATA. Furthermore, fully understanding Evans's disturbing ethical transgressions as the WMATA Board Chair and a D.C. Councilmember is a necessary precondition to the Committee considering legislation related to D.C. statehood.

While Evans ultimately left the WMATA Board and D.C. Council as a result of his ethical transgressions, the Committee still must examine and evaluate WMATA's capacity to adequately police itself, as well as the nature and extent of Evans's misconduct as a local elected official. We respectfully urge you to reconsider your reluctance to conduct oversight of this matter and join us in seeking transcribed interviews in this investigation.

We look forward to hearing from you promptly. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member



Mark Meadows
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

⁴ Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Mark Meadows, Ranking Member, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform (Sept. 12, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

⁵ Letter from Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform (Sept. 18, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

⁶ *H.R. 51: Making D.C. the 51st State: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform*, 116th Cong. (2019).

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Letter from Republican Members of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform to Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform (Sept. 19, 2019) (on file with the Committee).

⁹ *Reaching Hard-To-Count Communities in the 2020 Census: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform*, 116th Cong. 10 (2019).

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cc: The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman, Subcommittee on Government Operations