

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 18, 2018

The Honorable Robert Wilkie
Acting Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Acting Secretary Wilkie:

We are writing to request information related to efforts by Charles and David Koch, Koch Industries, and the numerous groups they fund to influence decisions at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

The close ties between individuals serving in the Trump administration and the Koch brothers' network have been widely reported over the last year and a half.¹ Long-standing members of the Koch network fill the ranks of the federal government, raising concerns about the network's access to and influence over federal decision-making. Americans have a right to know if special interests are unduly influencing public policy decisions that have profound implications for public health, the environment, and the economy.

Last December, a six-page report titled "Efforts in Government: Advancing Principled Public Policy" was distributed to the Seminar Network—a network of wealthy individuals organized by Charles and David Koch to fund their political and policy efforts.² Among other things, this report outlined regulatory rollbacks and laws the Kochs considered successes during the first year of the Trump administration. The report notes, "In the first eleven months of President Trump's Administration, the White House and Congress have closely followed the Network's Roadmap to Repeal."

The Koch network is taking credit for the following actions related to the VA in the Trump administration:

- passage of the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act
- introduction of the Veterans Care and Community Access Act

So that we may better understand the role that the Kochs and their affiliated groups have played in shaping public policy decisions in this administration, we request the following information not later than May 15, 2018:

¹ Public Citizen, *The Koch Government: How the Koch Brothers' Agenda has Infiltrated the Trump Administration*, November 30, 2017, available online at <https://www.citizen.org/sites/default/files/public-citizen-koch.pdf>.

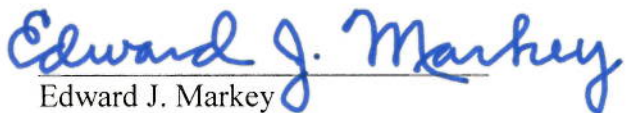
² See, e.g., Lee Fang and Nick Surgey, "Koch Document Reveals Laundry List of Policy Victories Extracted from the Trump Administration," *The Intercept*, February 28, 2018, available at <https://theintercept.com/2018/02/25/koch-brothers-trump-administration/>.

- Any communications or documentation thereof (including but not limited to emails, memos, meeting notes, correspondence, and calendar items) between VA employees and any employee, member, or representative of the following organizations:
 - o Koch Industries or any of its subsidiaries
 - o the Seminar Network
 - o Americans for Prosperity, Americans for Prosperity Foundation
 - o Freedom Partners, Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce, Freedom Partners Action Fund
 - o Concerned Veterans for America
- Any reports, documents, analyses, briefing materials, information, talking points, summaries, or other data pertaining VA policy decisions that VA employees shared with or received from any employee or representative of any of the organizations listed in the previous request.
- Darin Selnick currently serves at the VA and was previously employed by Concerned Veterans for America. For Mr. Selnick, please provide the following:
 - o Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Reports, other Office of Government Ethics (OGE) Form 201 Covered Records, and any supplemental material.
 - o Lists of all issues this individual has worked on, is permitted to work on, and is prohibited to work on.
 - o Any ethics agreements, recusals, waivers, or other documentation pertaining to which issues this individual can and cannot work on.
 - o This individual's counseling notes, emails, and any other communication between this individual and the VA's Ethics Office and OGE.
 - o A copy of this individual's signed "Ethics Pledge."


Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask the appropriate members of your staff to contact my senior advisor, Joe Gaeta at joe_gaeta@whitehouse.senate.gov.

Sincerely,


 Sheldon Whitehouse
 United States Senator


 Edward J. Markey
 United States Senator


 Catherine Cortez Masto
 United States Senator


 Ron Wyden
 United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren *Tom Udall*

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Tom Udall
United States Senator