

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<https://oversight.house.gov>

April 28, 2022

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
National Climate Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. McCarthy:

Committee on Oversight and Reform Republicans are conducting oversight of whether you are meeting your ethical obligations in your role as National Climate Advisor. According to recently released White House visitor logs, on October 25, 2021, you attended a meeting where Manish Bapna, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), was present.¹ In accordance with President Biden's Ethics Pledge, as the former President of NRDC, you may be barred from meeting with your former employer.² Meeting with your former employer raises concerns that senior level Administration officials are not taking their ethical obligations seriously. In order to ensure that you are following the law and the Biden Ethics Pledge, we request that you provide documents and information regarding any meetings you have had with your former employer as well as any ethics counseling you have received related to your employment.

On his first day in office, President Biden issued an Executive Order on Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Personnel (Biden Ethics Pledge). The Biden Ethics Pledge requires each political appointee in every executive branch agency to sign the pledge and adhere to its order.³ With regards to former employers and clients, the Biden Ethics Pledge bars participation "in any particular matter involving specific parties that is directly and substantially related to my former employer or former clients, including relations and contracts" for two years from the date of employment.⁴ Your meeting with NRDC appears to violate this policy.

As widely reported in the media, President Biden appointed you National Climate Advisor on January 20, 2021. Therefore, every meeting you attend, including the October 25,

¹ *Visitor Logs*, THE WHITE HOUSE, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/disclosures/visitor-logs/> (search for "Manish Bapna").

² *Executive Order on Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Personnel*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 20, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-ethics-commitments-by-executive-branch-personnel/>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

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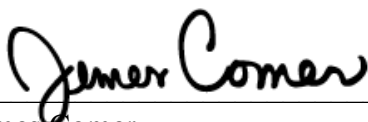
2021, meeting with the NRDC CEO, falls under the purview of the Biden Ethics Pledge, raising concerns that you may have violated the pledge.⁵

In order to better understand whether you are fulfilling your ethical obligations under the Biden Ethics Pledge with regard to your former employer NRDC, we request the following information no later than May 12, 2022:

1. A copy of your signed Biden Ethics Pledge.
2. All documents and communications, from January 20, 2021, to present, between or among NRDC or any of its representatives or employees and yourself.
3. All documents and communications, including your calendar entries, from January 20, 2021, to present, referring or relating to any meeting with NRDC, including but not limited to the October 25, 2021, meeting with Manish Bapna.
4. All of your calendar entries from January 20, 2021, to present.
5. All documents and communications referring or relating to any ethics counseling that you have received from January 20, 2021, to present.

To ask any follow-up or related questions, please contact the Committee on Oversight and Reform Republican staff at (202) 225-5074. The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,



James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Ralph Norman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment

cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Ro Khanna, Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment

⁵ Lisa Friedman, *Biden Introduces His Climate Team*, N.Y. TIMES (Dec. 19, 2020).