

CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA, CHAIRMAN

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
PAT ROBERTS, KANSAS
MICHAEL B. ENZI, WYOMING
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA

RON WYDEN, OREGON
DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

KOLAN DAVIS, STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL
JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

August 24, 2020

Mr. Charles Cooper
Cooper & Kirk, PLLC
1523 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Cooper:

As the Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, I am investigating matters related to U.S. Government policy towards Turkey, in particular the prosecution of the Turkish state-owned bank Halkbank related to its assistance to Iran in evading U.S. sanctions.¹ In his recent book, former National Security Advisor John Bolton has asserted that he has personal knowledge of information relevant to these matters.² I am therefore writing to request that Amb. Bolton provide assistance in my ongoing Finance Committee investigation of allegations that President Trump improperly obstructed the U.S. Department of Justice's prosecution of Halkbank.

Amb. Bolton asserts in his recent book that he was concerned that President Trump was granting personal favors to the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. In particular, Amb. Bolton asserts that President Trump promised Erdogan he would use his authority to halt any further enforcement actions against the bank, and that President Trump consequently instructed Treasury Secretary Mnuchin to interfere in the matter.³ Further, Amb. Bolton asserts that on more than one occasion the Department of Justice was aware of Secretary Mnuchin's efforts to halt the investigation and prosecution of Halkbank.⁴ Halkbank has been accused of one of the largest sanctions evasion schemes in history, and these Executive Branch actions may have affected the integrity of that U.S. investigation and related trade and tariff policies.⁵

¹ *Wyden Launches Investigation Into Halkbank Scandal*, Press Release, Oct. 24, 2019;

<https://www.finance.senate.gov/ranking-members-news/wyden-launches-investigation-into-halkbank-scandal>.

² JOHN BOLTON, *THE ROOM WHERE IT HAPPENED* 177 (2020).

³ *Id.* ("Trump started by saying we were getting very close to a resolution on Halkbank. He had just spoken to Mnuchin and Pompeo, and said we would be dealing with Erdogan's great son-in-law (Turkey's Finance Minister) to get it off his shoulders. Erdogan was very grateful, speaking in English no less.")

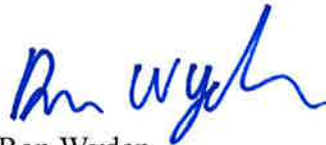
⁴ *Id.* at 170 *Id.* at 412.

⁵ *Id.* at 170 ("Although we had discussed these measure with Trump, he told me later that day he thought it was insulting to Turkey to sanction Cabinet officials. Instead, he wanted to double the existing steel tariffs on Turkey to 50 percent, which appalled the economic team. Trump had imposed worldwide steel and aluminum tariffs on

In connection with this investigation, I request that Amb. Bolton provide all relevant records—including, but not limited to, notes, documents, and electronic communications—related to these matters and the allegations made in his book concerning them. I also request that he participate in a voluntary, transcribed, staff interview at a mutually convenient date and time.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact my Finance Committee staff. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Ranking Member