

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

April 11, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Pamela J. Bondi
Attorney General of the United States
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi,

I write to request that you reconsider your recent decisions to drastically limit the consideration of criminal charges for violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) and to disband the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Foreign Influence Task Force. Enclosed with this letter is a staff report from the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (the Subcommittee), which includes findings and recommendations from the Subcommittee's investigation into foreign influence efforts by the Saudi Arabian Public Investment Fund (the PIF). The Subcommittee's findings include, among others, that foreign influence efforts are becoming increasingly sophisticated, that malign foreign actors will go to tremendous lengths to avoid disclosure under U.S. law, that FARA's current "commercial exception" permits significant foreign influence activity to evade current law, and that our current efforts at combating foreign influence are insufficient.

I am deeply concerned that your recent decisions suggest a conscious effort to turn a blind eye to—if not welcome—foreign influence. Indeed, recent analysis of FARA filings following your decision to limit consideration of criminal charges for FARA violations has shown that disclosure of informational materials — items required to be filed such as one-pagers and lobbyist talking points that are distributed to influence policy and public opinion — is down over 30 percent in the first quarter of 2025 compared to this time last year, and over 40 percent compared to 2022.¹ I urge you to reconsider your decision to curtail the enforcement of foreign influence laws given the increasingly sophisticated influence threats the United States faces.

The Subcommittee's inquiry has revealed the lengths foreign actors will go in order to avoid basic disclosure and transparency to the American people. The Subcommittee began its

¹ Ben Freeman and Nick Cleveland-Stout, *Foreign agent disclosures already down more than 30%*, RESPONSIBLE STATECRAFT (April 8, 2025), <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/foreign-influence-2671687642/>.

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inquiry in June 2023 by focusing on the proposed deal between the PGA Tour and LIV Golf to allow Saudi Arabia to effectively control golf in the United States. This quickly revealed the PIF's increasing investments in the United States, and the Subcommittee sought to learn more about the PIF's U.S. commercial activities by investigating four of its primary U.S.-based consultants—only one of whom was registered under FARA for its work. After the Subcommittee issued subpoenas to these entities, the PIF took the extraordinary step of suing these consultants in Saudi Arabian Administrative Court in an attempt to prevent their compliance. The PIF's efforts prove an essential point—many foreign actors do not want the United States government to have a full understanding of their U.S. investments. It is important that we learn what they're hiding and why.

Based on these findings, I have introduced the Sovereign Wealth Fund Transparency Act to fix this significant FARA loophole and to provide DOJ with additional civil authority to enforce FARA. To help our country's efforts at combating foreign influence, this new authority must be enacted and utilized. You already possess many of the tools to assist in this effort, and the Sovereign Wealth Fund Transparency Act will provide DOJ with additional means to combat foreign influence. I urge you to not only support this legislation, but to also use the tools you already have and to reconsider your recent decisions in order to achieve our shared goal of keeping our country safe.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman

Enclosure