

United States Senate

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

July 30, 2026

VIA EMAIL

Mr. Bruce Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
Taylor Farms
150 Main St
Salinas, CA 93901

Dear Mr. Taylor:

I write regarding the record-breaking cyclosporiasis outbreak and Taylor Farms' acts of backroom dealing that may have delayed the government's response to a preventable public health crisis that has sickened thousands of Americans. The outbreak and subsequent cover up of its origins have eroded public trust in the food supply and created an unacceptable risk to public health. Accordingly, I request information and records from Taylor Farms regarding the ongoing investigation into the outbreak, and the influence of Taylor Farms on staffing and program cuts at the agency.

Recent reporting indicates that Taylor Farms—which last year donated \$1 million to a political action committee supporting President Trump—contacted the White House seeking to delay the recall of its tainted produce, and that the White House brought officials from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) onto the call.¹ According to former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, there is no precedent for such intervention from the White House in the agency's management of food safety recalls.²

The call appears to have been facilitated by Trent Morse, a lobbyist who previously worked as a senior White House personnel official and is now working for Taylor Farms.³ This was not the first time that Taylor Farms has sought to use political connections to influence regulation of the industry in which it operates: Since the beginning of the second Trump

¹ Sabrina Siddiqi et al, *Taylor Farms Called White House to Try to Delay Cyclospora Recall*, WALL ST. J. (Jul. 24, 2026), <https://www.wsj.com/health/taylor-farms-cyclospora-recall-delay-call-41fef0bc>; Brett Stover, *Taylor Farms political donations questioned amid cyclosporiasis outbreak*, Fox40 (Jul. 21, 2026), <https://fox40.com/news/cyclosporiasis-outbreak/taylor-farms-political-donations-cyclosporiasis-outbreak/>.

² Transcript: Former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb on "Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan, CBS NEWS (Jul. 26, 2026), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/scott-gottlieb-former-fda-commissioner-face-the-nation-transcript-july-26-2026/>.

³ Siddiqi et al, *supra* note 1.

Administration, the company has spent \$810,000 on lobbying regarding “regulation of food safety.”⁴

Long before the outbreak made news, the Trump Administration’s cuts to food safety programs and staff matched Taylor Farms’ anti-regulation preferences, including cuts in monitoring food-borne pathogens, delaying implementation of the Food Traceability Rule, and cutting staff that communicate information about outbreaks to the public.⁵ Meanwhile, the response to the outbreak itself appears to be the latest instance of a disturbing pattern I have previously raised: the Trump Administration’s willingness to let corporate financial interests undermine Americans’ health.⁶

The severity of the outbreak indicates that Taylor Farms is simply unprepared to respond to an outbreak of foodborne illness at this scale. In order for the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to understand the outbreak’s origins, spread, and the adequacy of Taylor Farms’ response, please provide the following information and records by August 13, 2026:

1. All records⁷ regarding the Taylor Farms’ response to the ongoing cyclospora outbreak.
2. All records reflecting Taylor Farms policies and procedures for preventing, monitoring, and responding to food-borne pathogens.
3. All communications between Taylor Farms and the White House, including the Executive Office of the President and the Domestic Policy Council, referring or related to the ongoing cyclospora outbreak.
4. All communications between Taylor Farms and the Food and Drug Administration, referring or related to the ongoing cyclospora outbreak.

⁴ Kate Taylor, *Taylor Farms Spent Big on MAGA and Anti-Regulatory Lobbying Before Diarrhea Outbreak*, WIRED, (Jul. 21, 2026), <https://www.wired.com/story/diarrhea-outbreak-taylor-farms-maga-donations-lobbying/>.

⁵ See, e.g., Jessica Glenza, *Michigan health officials identify ‘potential source’ of parasite outbreak*, THE GUARDIAN, (Jul. 13, 2026, at 7:55 PM), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jul/13/cyclospora-outbreak-parasite-explosive-diarrhea>; Aria Bendix, *The CDC quietly scaled back a surveillance program for foodborne illnesses*, NBC NEWS, (Aug. 26, 2025, at 9:12 AM), <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/cdc-quietly-scaled-back-surveillance-program-foodborne-illnesses-rcna227089>; Angelica Peebles, *Cyclospora outbreak tests RFK Jr. ’s promise to overhaul food system, rebuild trust in CDC*, CNBC, (Jul. 23, 2026) <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/07/23/cyclospora-outbreak-tests-rfk-jr-response-funding-cuts.html>.

⁶ Letter from Sen. Richard Blumenthal et al to Kyle Diamantis, Acting Commissioner, Food and Drug Admin., May 15, 2026 (<https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/20265151ettertofdadonfruitflavoredvapesauthorization.pdf>).

⁷ “Records” include written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (emails, email attachments, Signal, WhatsApp, or other encrypted messages, and any other electronically-created or stored information), calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether or not they resulted in final documents).

Please contact the Subcommittee if you have questions about the procedures for transmitting documents. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Blumenthal" clearly legible.

Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman