

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

December 14, 2016

The Honorable Mike Pence
Vice President-Elect of the United States
Presidential Transition Office
1800 F Street NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Vice President-Elect Pence:

We are writing about troubling allegations regarding attempts by President-Elect Donald Trump's transition team to identify Department of Energy (DOE) employees and contractors who have worked on The Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or on domestic efforts to cut the nation's carbon output. We are concerned that these efforts may be an attempt to apply an ideological "litmus test" to career civil servants, which runs counter to the principles of a merit-based civil service and the prohibition against discrimination against civil servants on the basis of political affiliation.¹

According to the *Washington Post* and other news outlets, the transition team has issued a questionnaire to the Energy Department requesting a list of all individuals who have taken part in international climate talks over the past five years and who have participated in certain interagency climate change meetings.² The questionnaire also reportedly requested information on certain employees at DOE's National Laboratories, including a list of their peer-reviewed publications, professional society memberships, affiliations, and the websites they maintain or to which they contribute.³

We are concerned that these efforts to single out particular Department employees involved in efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions may be an attempt to target DOE employees whose scientific views on climate change differ from those of the incoming Trump Administration. While the new Administration is entitled to select political appointees who share the President-Elect's views on climate change, any effort to retaliate against, undermine, demote, or marginalize civil servants on the basis of their scientific analysis would be an abuse of authority.

¹ 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(1)(E); 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(10); 5 U.S.C. § 2301.

² *Trump Transition Team for Energy Department Seeks Names of Employees Involved in Climate Meetings*, *Washington Post* (Dec. 9, 2016) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/12/09/trump-transition-team-for-energy-department-seeks-names-of-employees-involved-in-climate-meetings/?utm_term=.6be16cd7e5d8).

³ *Id.*

In order to address this issue, we request that you provide the following documents by December 23, 2016:

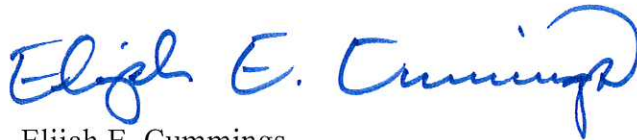
1. A copy of the transition team memorandum and questionnaire sent to the Department of Energy referenced in the *Washington Post* report;
2. A copy of any memoranda, questionnaires, or other requests sent to other federal agencies seeking the identification of civil service personnel or other information in order to obtain the political or personal policy opinions of individual civil servants; and
3. Any communications provided to the Department of Energy or any other agency or department or its employees relating to such memoranda or questionnaires, including relating to the potential consequences or repercussions for not providing the requested information.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Una Lee of the Energy and Commerce Committee at (202) 225-3641 or Krista Boyd of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government
Reform