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United States Senate

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

March 6, 2025

The Honorable JD Vance
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
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The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
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The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
Department of Commerce
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The Honorable Pete Hegseth
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The Honorable Chris Wright
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The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
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The Honorable Kristi Noem
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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The Honorable Scott Turner
Secretary
Department of Housing and Urban Development
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The Honorable Doug Burgum
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The Honorable Pamela Bondi
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The Honorable Russell Vought
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The Honorable Marco Rubio
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The Honorable Sean Duffy
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The Honorable Scott Bessent
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National Archives and Records Administration
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The Honorable Doug Collins
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Charles Ezell
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The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
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Marco Rubio
Acting Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

With broad reporting of federal agencies deleting information and data from government websites and concerns regarding the preservation of datasets and databases, this letter serves as notice to you to ensure compliance with all federal laws governing retention, availability, and preservation of federal records. You are responsible for ensuring that your departments, agencies, and sub-agencies do not engage in deleting any information and data in violation of federal law.¹

¹ See, e.g., Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3101, 3106; Presidential Records Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 2201 – 2203; Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. § 3506; 18 U.S.C. § 2071 (concealing, removing, or destroying records is a criminal offense). See, e.g., *Trump Administration's Data Deletions Set off 'A Mad Scramble,' Researcher Says*, AP News (Feb. 3, 2025); *Thousands of U.S. Government Web Pages Have Been Taken Down Since Friday*, New

As the chief oversight Committee of the U.S. Senate and with respect to the Committee's broad jurisdiction over all government operations, I am directing you to retain and preserve all documents, records, and communications in your possession, custody, or control as of January 20, 2025, in accordance with the law. All officials and employees, including contractor employees and departments and agencies relying on outside experts or companies, should be advised of their obligations under applicable law. This includes retaining federal data sets, which are subject to specific protections and must remain publicly available, credible, and accurate. Additionally, please be aware that any communications on personal messaging accounts, including Signal, social media accounts, and personal email accounts, that concern government business are subject to the Federal Records Act and must be preserved.²

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized by Rule XXV (k)(2)(B) of the Standing Rules of the Senate to investigate matters that aid the Committee in "studying the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of all agencies and departments of the Government."³ Under Senate Resolution 94, Sec. 12(e)(2) of the 119th Congress, the Committee is authorized to review "the possible existence of fraud, misfeasance, malfeasance, collusion, mismanagement, incompetence, corruption or unethical practices, waste, extravagance, conflicts of interest, and the improper expenditure of Government funds."⁴

Thank you for your prompt attention and cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Sen. Peters' staff at (202) 224-2627.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
Ranking Member
Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs Committee

York Times (Feb. 2, 2025); *Health Resources Vanish Following D.E.I. and Gender Orders*, New York Times (Jan. 31, 2025); *A Look at Federal Health Data Taken Offline*, KFF (Feb. 2, 2025); *Justice Department deletes database tracking federal police misconduct*, Washington Post (Feb. 21, 2021); *Doctors for America, v. Office of Personnel Management et al.*, 25-cv-322-JDB (D.D.C. Feb. 11, 2025) (ordering HHS, CDC, and FDA to restore certain webpages and datasets); *National Treasury Employees Union et al., v. Russell Vought, et al.*, 25-cv-381-ABJ (D.D.C. Feb. 14, 2025) (Second Declaration of Erie Meyer; Court Order directing CFPB not to "delete, destroy, remove, or impair any data or other CFPB records covered by the Federal Records Act").

² See, e.g., 44 U.S.C. § 2911; 44 U.S.C. §§ 3506, 3563.

³ S. Rule XXV(k)(2)(B).

⁴ S. Res. 94, Sec. 12(e)(2).