

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 6, 2026

Mr. Michael McElwain

Dear Mr. McElwain,

On February 13, 2025, Safe America Media LLC (Safe America Media) signed a no-bid contract worth \$143 million to produce an advertising campaign for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The circumstances surrounding the awarding of this lucrative, no-bid contract that ultimately benefitted a business with “long-standing personal and business ties to [DHS Secretary Kristi] Noem” raise a number of important questions.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, we write to request information and records regarding Safe America Media’s contract, work performed on the ad campaign, and any subcontracts that have been awarded to support the initial contract.

According to public records, Safe America Media is registered to your home address and was incorporated just seven days before it signed a non-competitive contract worth \$143 million for the production of several advertisements starring DHS Secretary Kristi Noem.<sup>2</sup> As far as we can tell, Safe America Media has no office, no website, and no social media presence.

The Strategy Group has confirmed that it received a subcontract to work on the no-bid ad campaign awarded to Safe America Media.<sup>3</sup> According to public reporting, the Strategy Group—and its CEO Benjamin Yoho—have a long relationship with DHS Secretary Kristi Noem and her Chief Advisor Corey Lewandowski.<sup>4</sup> Secretary Noem confirmed at a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee on March 3, 2026, that the Strategy Group managed the ad campaigns for her 2022 gubernatorial campaign.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Lewandowski reportedly served as the intermediary that facilitated the company’s work on that campaign.<sup>6</sup> In 2023, Mr. Yoho attended

<sup>1</sup> *Firm Tied to Kristi Noem Secretly Got Money From \$220 Million DHS Ad Contracts*, PROPUBLICA (Nov. 14, 2025) (online at <https://www.propublica.org/article/kristi-noem-dhs-ad-campaign-strategy-group>).

<sup>2</sup> *See id.*; Department of Homeland Security, *Justification and Approval for Other than Full and Open Competition* (2025) (online and available for download at <https://sam.gov/opp/73477226ef6b4bd093263512124126e9/view>); Delaware Entity Search (online at <https://icis.corp.delaware.gov/ecorp/entitysearch/NameSearch.aspx>), “Safe America Media LLC” (1 result) (search conducted Mar. 6, 2026) (PDF on file with the Office of Senator Peter Welch); USAspending.gov, *Indefinite Delivery / Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Contract with Safe America Media LLC* (online at [https://www.usaspending.gov/award/CONT\\_IDV\\_70RDA225D00000004\\_7001](https://www.usaspending.gov/award/CONT_IDV_70RDA225D00000004_7001)) (accessed Mar. 6, 2026).

<sup>3</sup> *See* The Strategy Group Co. (@StrategyGroupCo), X (Mar. 3, 2026) (online at <https://x.com/StrategyGroupCo/status/2028931636314710113?s=20>).

<sup>4</sup> *See* PROPUBLICA, *supra* note 1.

<sup>5</sup> *See* Committee on the Judiciary, *Hearing on Oversight of the Department of Homeland Security* (Mar. 3, 2026) (online at <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/committee-activity/hearings/oversight-of-the-department-of-homeland-security-03-03-2026>).

<sup>6</sup> *See* PROPUBLICA, *supra* note 1.

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then-Governor Noem's inauguration and sat next to Mr. Lewandowski.<sup>7</sup> Between 2023 to 2024,<sup>8</sup> the Strategy Group was awarded an \$8.5 million contract to produce a series of commercials starring then-Governor Noem pretending to perform various jobs.<sup>9</sup> According to public reporting, Mr. Lewandowski also hired Mr. Yoho to provide services for the press campaign to promote Secretary Noem's memoir in 2024.<sup>10</sup> Most recently, the Strategy Group received a subcontract from Safe America Media to help produce a DHS ad campaign while Mr. Yoho's wife, Tricia McLaughlin, served as the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Public Affairs.<sup>11</sup>

In order to better understand the relationships between Safe America Media, the Strategy Group, and DHS political leadership, and to understand how \$143 million in taxpayer dollars were spent, we request the following documents by March 13, 2026:

1. A copy of your subcontract agreement with the Strategy Group LLC.
2. A list of any other subcontractors, along with copies of those subcontracts, awarded under the \$143 million contract between Safe America Media and DHS.
3. Any invoices from the Strategy Group—or other subcontractors—connected to the DHS ad campaign, pursuant to the subcontract agreement or otherwise.
4. Any communication(s) between you or any agent of Safe America Media and any subcontractors, or agents thereof, related to the production of the DHS ad campaign.
5. Any communication(s) between you or any agent of Safe America Media and any DHS personnel, including but not limited to Secretary Noem, Corey Lewandowski, and Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin.

In addition, please provide detailed responses to the following questions:

1. When did Safe America Media first communicate with DHS about the potential of a contract?
2. Do you or Safe America Media have any contractual, lobbying, or other relationship with Corey Lewandowski regarding this contract? If so, please provide any documentation regarding that relationship.

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<sup>7</sup> See SDPB, *2023 Inaugural Coverage*, at 1:02:58 (YouTube, Jan. 7, 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnlzNaoBsq4>; see also Cory Allen Heidelberg, *Lewandowski in the West Wing . . . at Noem's Inaugural?*, DAKOTA FREE PRESS (Jan. 8, 2023), <https://dakotafreepress.com/2023/01/08/lewandowski-in-the-west-wingat-noems-inaugural/>.

<sup>8</sup> See S.D. Governor's Office of Economic Development, Second Amdt. to Contract #23-0105-013, at 1 (Mar. 28, 2024) (online at <https://open.sd.gov/contracts/010/23-0105-013.pdf>).

<sup>9</sup> See PROPUBLICA, *supra* note 1.

<sup>10</sup> See *id.*

<sup>11</sup> See *id.*; *Department of Homeland Security Spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin to Leave Agency*, CNN (Feb. 17, 2026) (online at <https://www.cnn.com/2026/02/17/politics/tricia-mclaughlin-homeland-security-spokesperson-leaving>) (highlighting how Ms. McLaughlin (and her replacement) have been with the Trump Administration “since Day 1”).

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3. Did Safe America Media directly or indirectly compensate—financially or otherwise—any DHS personnel, including but not limited to Special Government Employees, in connection with the DHS ad campaign?
4. Please identify all individuals and firms that Safe America Media compensated—financially or otherwise—in connection with performing the contract for the DHS ad campaign.
5. Has Safe America Media received any other contracts or subcontracts for services connected to or solicited by DHS? If so, please identify the projects and provide a description of Safe America Media's involvement.
6. Does Safe America Media intend to pursue additional contracts or subcontracts related to DHS or any other federal agency?
7. Does Safe America Media have a conflict of interest policy? If so, please provide the policy. If it does not maintain such a policy, explain why not.
8. How many individuals were employed by Safe America Media at the time of DHS's award of the \$143 million contract? Please identify personnel and their roles at the company.
9. How many individuals are currently employed by Safe America Media? Please identify personnel and their roles at the company.
10. What is your role at Safe America Media?

Sincerely,



Peter Welch  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator  
Ranking Member, Permanent  
Subcommittee on  
Investigations