

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 6, 2026

Mr. Benjamin Yoho
Chief Executive Officer
The Strategy Group Company
7669 Stagers Loop
Delaware, OH 43015

Dear Mr. Yoho,

On March 3, 2026, the Strategy Group publicly confirmed that it subcontracted with Safe America Media LLC (Safe America Media) to help produce an advertising campaign for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) worth \$143 million.¹ 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.² Accordingly, we write to request information and records regarding the Strategy Group’s agreement with Safe America Media.

According to public reporting, the Strategy Group—and you yourself—have a long relationship with DHS Secretary Kristi Noem and her Chief Advisor Corey Lewandowski.³ Secretary Noem confirmed at a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee on March 3, 2026 that your firm managed the ad campaigns for her 2022 gubernatorial campaign.⁴ Mr. Lewandowski reportedly served as the intermediary that facilitated your company’s work on that campaign.⁵ In 2023, you attended then-Governor Noem’s inauguration and sat next to Mr. Lewandowski.⁶ Between 2023 to 2024,⁷ 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.⁸ According to public reporting, Mr. Lewandowski also hired you to provide services for the press campaign to

¹ See The Strategy Group Co. (@StrategyGroupCo), X (Mar. 3, 2026) (online at <https://x.com/StrategyGroupCo/status/2028931636314710113?s=20>).

² *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>).

³ See *id.*

⁴ 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>).

⁵ See PROPUBLICA, *supra* note 2.

⁶ See SDPB, *2023 Inaugural Coverage*, at 1:02:58 (YouTube, Jan. 7, 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnlzNaoBs44>; see also Cory Allen Heidelberger, *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-wing-at-noems-inaugural/>.

⁷ 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>).

⁸ See PROPUBLICA, *supra* note 2.

United States Senate

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promote Secretary Noem’s memoir in 2024.⁹ Most recently, the Strategy Group received a subcontract from Safe America Media to help produce a DHS ad campaign while your wife, Tricia McLaughlin, served as the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Public Affairs.¹⁰ And this week, Secretary Noem testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that she knows both you and your firm.¹¹

Despite your wife’s recent social media statement that neither you nor the Strategy Group “have ever had a contract with DHS,”¹² the Strategy Group confirmed this week that it did receive a subcontract to work on the no-bid ad campaign awarded to Safe America Media, that it was paid “\$226,137.17 total for 5 film shoots, 45 produced video advertisements and 6 produced radio advertisements.”¹³ It is not clear why Safe America Media, a company that was incorporated seven days before it received the \$143 million contract, was awarded such a large sum on an uncompetitive basis to perform work it has no proven record of undertaking.¹⁴ Safe America Media is registered to the personal address of Mike McElwain, a longtime Republican political operative.¹⁵

In order to better understand the relationships between the Strategy Group, Safe America Media, and DHS political leadership, and to better 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 Safe America Media.
2. Any invoices to Safe America Media connected to the DHS ad campaign, pursuant to the subcontract agreement or otherwise.

⁹ See *id.*

¹⁰ 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”).

¹¹ See Committee on the Judiciary, *supra* note 4.

¹² See Tricia McLaughlin (@TriciaOhio), X (Mar. 3, 2026) (online at <https://x.com/TriciaOhio/status/2028932577353187370?s=20>).

¹³ See The Strategy Group Co., *supra* note 1.

¹⁴ See 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) (accessed Mar. 6, 2026).

¹⁵ See PROPUBLICA, *supra* note 2; *How the White House Hired Republican Political Firms to Launch an Anti-Migrant Ad Campaign*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Mar. 10, 2025), <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2025-03-10/dhs-expedites-process-to-award-two-republican-linked-firms-part-of-its-200-million-ad-campaign>.

United States Senate

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3. Any communication(s) between you or any agent of your firm and Safe America Media, or any agent thereof, related to the production of the DHS ad campaign.
4. Any communication(s) between you or any agent of your firm 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 the Strategy Group first communicate with Safe America Media about the potential of subcontracting for DHS?
2. Do you or the Strategy Group have any contractual, lobbying, or other relationship with Corey Lewandowski regarding this contract? If so, please provide any documentation regarding that relationship.
3. Did the Strategy Group 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 the Strategy Group compensated—financially or otherwise—in connection with performing the subcontract for the DHS ad campaign.
5. Has the Strategy Group received any other contracts or subcontracts on any projects involving DHS? If so, please identify the projects and provide a description of the Strategy Group's involvement.
6. Do you intend to pursue additional contracts or subcontracts related to DHS or any other federal agency?
7. Does the Strategy Group have a conflict of interest policy? If so, please provide the policy. If it does not maintain such a policy, explain why not.

Sincerely,



Peter Welch
Peter Welch
United States Senator



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