

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 14, 2022

Ms. Debra Steidel Wall  
Acting Archivist of the United States  
National Archives and Records Administration  
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Ms. Steidel Wall:

Committee on Oversight and Reform Republicans are continuing to investigate the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) role in the FBI raid of former President Donald J. Trump's home at Mar-a-Lago. Committee Republicans have learned that NARA's actions initiated the Department of Justice's (DOJ) criminal investigation against the former president the same day Committee Democrats inquired about whether a referral to DOJ had been made. The possibility of NARA being pressured by Committee Democrats to pursue the former president is troubling, and Committee Republicans are concerned about NARA's continued refusal to provide information about its role in the raid on the former president's home.<sup>1</sup>

According to correspondence between Committee Democrats and NARA, on February 9, 2022, Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney wrote to NARA raising concerns about 15 boxes of presidential records stored at the former president's home at Mar-a-Lago and asking whether the Archivist had been in contact with the Attorney General on this matter.<sup>2</sup> The same day—February 9, 2022—a “referral” from NARA was “sent to the United States Department of Justice” that initiated an investigation into the former president.<sup>3</sup> The fact that NARA transmitted to DOJ a referral that launched a criminal investigation of the former president the same day the Democrat Chairwoman of the Committee inquired whether the agency had been in contact with DOJ raises serious concerns about whether NARA made the referral after pressure from Committee Democrats.

In an October 7, 2022, letter responding to a previous Committee Republicans' October 4, 2022, letter requesting documents about NARA's interactions with Congressional Democrats, you wrote that NARA “take[s] [its] role as a non-political agency very seriously”<sup>4</sup> but at the same time you failed to provide the documents and other information requested. In order to

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., Letter from Ms. Debra Steidel Wall, Acting Archivist, NARA to Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Sep. 22, 2022); Letter from Ms. Debra Steidel Wall, Acting Archivist, NARA to Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Oct. 7, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform to Hon. David Ferriero, Archivist, NARA (Feb. 9, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Affidavit in support of an application under Rule 41 for a warrant to search and seize, *In the matter of the search of: Locations within the premises to be searched in Attachment A* (“Mar-a-Lago search warrant affidavit”) (S.D. Fla.) (submitted Aug. 5, 2022; entered on docket Aug. 26, 2022).

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Ms. Debra Steidel Wall, Acting Archivist, NARA to Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Oct. 7, 2022).

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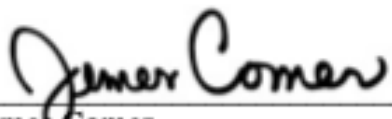
understand whether and to what extent Congressional Democrats influenced and coordinated with NARA, please provide the documents previously requested in the October 4, 2022, Committee letter. Additionally, please provide the following documents, covering the time period from January 1, 2020, to present, no later than October 28, 2022:

1. All documents and communications between or among employees or agents of NARA and DOJ referring or relating to the Trump Administration's control, transfer, storage, or other handling of documents subject to the Presidential Records Act.

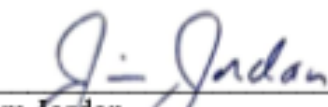
To make arrangements to ask any related follow-up questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform Republican staff at (202) 225-5074.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform has specific jurisdiction over NARA under House Rule X. Additionally, the Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



James Comer  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight & Reform



Jim Jordan  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary