

United States Senate

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

DAVID M. WEINBERG, STAFF DIRECTOR
WILLIAM E. HENDERSON III, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
LAURA W. KILBRIDE, CHIEF CLERK

November 15, 2024

Robert Shriver, III
Acting Director
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20415

Dear Acting Director Shriver:

We write to request additional information on the conversion of Biden Administration political appointees into nonpolitical permanent positions, often referred to as “burrowing.” As the committee of jurisdiction over the federal workforce and OPM, it is imperative that the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs have up to date and complete information regarding the burrowing of political appointees.¹

Current law requires the Office of Personnel Management (“OPM”) to provide Congress with quarterly updates on burrowing of current or former political appointees.² While we appreciate your submissions this year, the information provided only covers through June 30, 2024, leaving a substantial opportunity for individuals to burrow during the final 6 months of President Biden’s administration.

The most recent report provided seven examples of burrowing, five of which were approved by OPM, two of which remain pending, and none of which were denied. Of the five approved conversions, four received substantial raises, including one receiving a nearly \$80,000 increase in base pay.

Ensuring the integrity of the federal workforce from partisan influence is critical to the public’s trust in government. A past prominent example of the abuse of the political conversion system was Leandra English who used her conversion from a political appointee in the Obama Administration to a career position at the CFPB, to then suing President Trump for control over the CFPB.³

¹ Senate Rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate and Senate Resolution 59 of the 118th Congress. Further, under both Rule XXV and S. Res. 59, the Committee is authorized to investigate matters that aid in “studying the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of all agencies and departments of the Government.”

² Edward “Ted” Kaufman and Michael Leavitt Presidential Improvement Act of 2015 (“PIA”).

³ See, *English v. Trump*, 279 F. Supp. 3d 307 (D.D.C. 2018); and Victoria Guida, *Trump taps Mulvaney to head CFPB, sparking confusion over agency’s leadership*, POLITICO (Nov. 24, 2017), <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/11/24/richard-cordray-successor-cfpb-leandra-english-259612>.

For this reason, please provide us with the following information no later than 5:00PM on November 22, 2024.

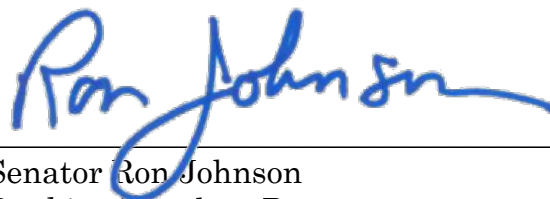
1. An unredacted and non-anonymized list of individuals who have requested to be converted from a current or prior political position to a career position from June 30, 2024 to the date of your response, including:
 - a. The employee's full name;
 - b. The employee's current or former political position;
 - c. The employee's date of appointment to the political position and, if applicable, the date the employee ceased to serve in a political position;
 - d. All jobs previously held by the employee requesting a conversion;
 - e. All salaries received by the employee requesting a conversion during his or her tenure at the agency and the date of any changes in salary;
 - f. The proposed nonpolitical position title, office, and agency the political appointee has requested conversion to;
 - g. The proposed civil service grade and basic rate of pay for the employee in the requested role;
 - h. The status of the conversion request;
 - i. The date of appointment to the nonpolitical position, if applicable; and,
 - j. Any OPM findings from its review of the individual's requested conversion and any corrective action taken.
2. All unredacted and non-anonymized information requested in 1.a.-j. for January 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024.
3. Weekly updates for all information requested in 1.a.-j. between OPM's response and January 20, 2025.

Thank you for your attention and prompt response to this matter.

Sincerely,



Senator Rand Paul, M.D.
Ranking Member, Homeland Security
& Governmental Affairs Committee



Senator Ron Johnson
Ranking Member, Permanent
Subcommittee on Investigations

See also, Letter from U.S. Senator Ron Johnson, Chairman, S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Governmental Affairs, to Kathleen McGettigan, Acting Dir., U.S. Off. of Personnel Mgmt. (Nov. 29, 2017), <http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/imo/media/doc/2017-11-28%20RHJ-to-McGettigan-OPM-CFPB-Appointee-Approval%20Final.pdf>.



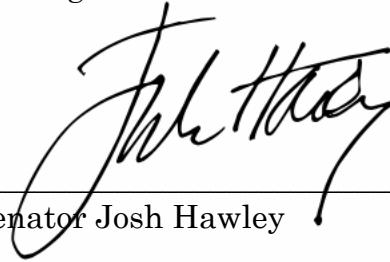
Senator James Lankford
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Government Operations & Border
Management



Senator Mitt Romney
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Emerging Threats & Spending
Oversight



Senator Rick Scott



Senator Josh Hawley

CC: Senator Gary Peters
Chairman, Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee