

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to strongly urge you to rescind your illegal attempt to remove Chair Ellen Weintraub from the Federal Election Commission (FEC), the independent and bipartisan agency charged with enforcing our campaign finance laws. Chair Weintraub must be able continue to serve in her role unless and until you use the lawful process of nominating a commissioner for the Senate's consideration and that nominee is confirmed.

Your letter seeking to remove a commissioner ignores the legal requirements that commissioners may not be removed without cause. This effort violates the procedure set in statute for replacing commissioners in the *Federal Election Campaign Act* and appears to be a bad faith effort to dismantle the only federal agency that protects the American people's right to transparency in campaigns and elections.

Removing an FEC commissioner without nominating a replacement is without precedent. With Republican Commissioner Sean Cooksey's recent resignation to join your administration, regular order would be to consult with the Senate on a bipartisan basis and nominate a pair of Republican and Democratic commissioners for the Senate's consideration. Unlawfully removing a commissioner with an existing vacancy, without consultation with the Senate on nominations to replace them, demonstrates an intent to ignore the Senate's constitutional role and diminish the Commission's ability to hold accountable potential violations of campaign finance law.

Chair Weintraub, a Democratic commissioner, has a strong record of seeking to enforce the law that regulates money in politics on a nonpartisan basis, including holding presidential campaigns accountable. Congress created the FEC over 50 years ago, in the wake of the Watergate scandal that eroded trust in our government. The FEC was designed to be free from the interference of those it might be regulating and to ensure the American people had insight into how money was being spent to influence its elected officials. The role of money in our elections has changed since the FEC was first created, particularly as the Supreme Court has issued decisions permitting dark money to infiltrate our elections. However, the need for balanced and dedicated commissioners who work on behalf of the country has remained unchanged.

Further, record spending in our elections, including from ultra-wealthy individuals who now serve at the highest levels of power, has placed the FEC's responsibilities at the heart of maintaining a healthy democracy. While years of deadlock at the Commission have hindered its ability to serve as an effective regulator, removing commissioners without cause moves beyond dysfunction to outright destruction.

We call on you to rescind your unlawful letter and pursue the legal process for replacing commissioners in bipartisan consultation with the Senate.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



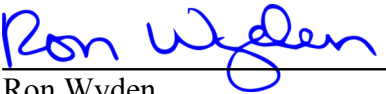
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator




Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff  
United States Senator



Peter Welch  
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Jack Reed  
United States Senator