

2020

Emails Reveal Burisma Consulting Firm Leveraged Hunter Biden To Get State Dept. Meetings

A State Department email from February 2016 cited specifically Hunter Biden's involvement with Burisma when discussing the possibility of setting up a meeting with Burisma's consulting firm.

Finally, U.S. Senators are waking up to the possibility that 2020 Democratic contender Joe Biden may have knowingly permitted his son Hunter to “sell” access to the U.S. State Department while Joe was serving as Vice President. The line between crony capitalism and outright corruption is a thin one, but when it comes to assessing the legitimacy of Trump's interest in ending Ukrainian corruption, it's worth determining the veracity of corruption allegations, of which Hunter Biden represents a not insignificant part.

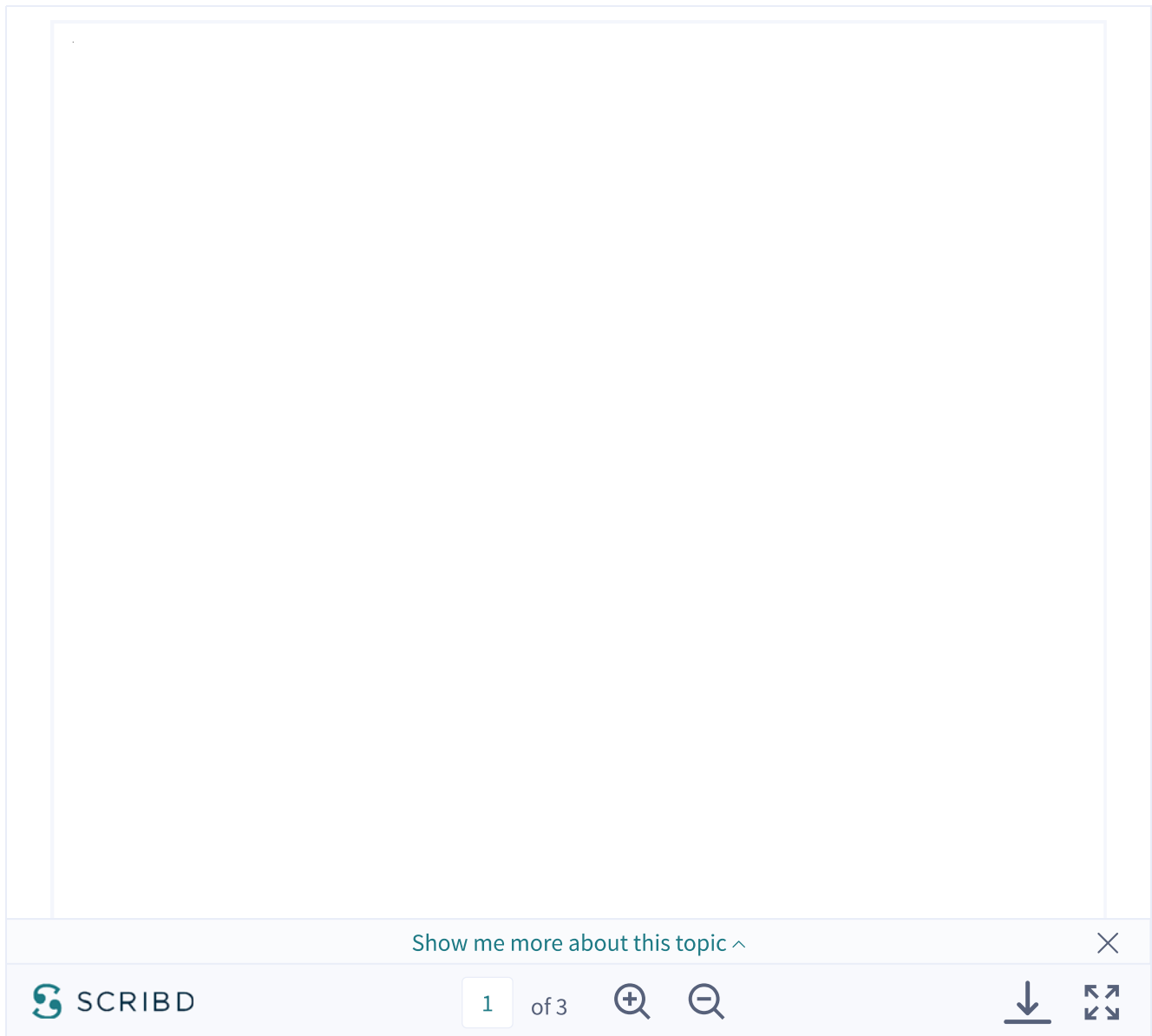
On Wednesday, U.S. Senators Ron Johnson, R-Wis., chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, sent a **letter** to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo Wednesday inquiring about the manner in which the consulting firm Blue Star Strategies, hired by the infamous Ukrainian natural gas company Burisma, might have utilized Hunter Biden's role on the Burisma board to “possibly influence State Department matters,” according to a press release from the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The letter to Pompeo was prompted by a series of State Department emails released via FOIA and **published by reporter John Solomon**, revealing that Burisma's consulting firm had in fact mentioned Hunter Biden when seeking a meeting with the State Department to discuss corruption allegations against the company. A State Department **email from February 2016** specifically cited Hunter Biden's involvement with Burisma when discussing the possibility of setting up a meeting with Burisma's consulting firm. According to the email, the consulting firm made the State Department aware that Hunter was one of their client's employees.

Per our conversation, Karen Tramontano of Blue Star Strategies requested a meeting to discuss with [Under Secretary] Novelli [U.S. Government] remarks alleging Burisma (Ukrainian energy company) of corruption. She noted that two high profile U.S. citizens are affiliated with the company (including Hunter Biden as a board member). Tramontano would like to talk with U/S Novelli about getting a better understanding of how the U.S. came to the determination that the company is corrupt. According to Tramontano, there is no evidence of corruption, has been no hearing or process, and evidence to the contrary has not been considered. Would appreciate any background you may be able to provide on this issue and suggested TPs for U/S Novelli's meeting.

Emails also indicate that Hunter Biden and his fellow Burisma board member Devin Archer **scheduled meetings** with high-ranking members of the U.S. State Department at the time that Burisma was under investigation for corruption by the Ukrainian government. According to Johnson and Grassley's letter, "In May 2015, Hunter Biden asked to meet then-Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken to 'get [his] advice on a couple of things' and again for lunch on July 22, 2015. On March 2, 2016, just one day after Tramontano was scheduled to meet with Under Secretary Novelli about Burisma, Devon Archer was scheduled to meet with Secretary of State John Kerry."

[Biden Blinken Meeting](#) by [JohnSolomon](#) on Scribd



And apparently, there were some who were deeply concerned about Hunter Biden’s involvement with Burisma. Chris Heinz, former business partner to Hunter and step-son to then-Secretary of State John Kerry, wrote to the State Department expressing his consternation at Hunter’s involvement with Burisma in May of 2014, a month after Hunter joined Burisma’s board. Heinz’s spokesman was quoted as saying that Heinz “strongly warned Mr. Archer that working with Burisma was unacceptable” and that “[t]he lack of judgment in this matter was a major catalyst for Mr. Heinz ending his business relationships with Mr. Archer and Mr. Biden.”

Grassley and Johnson’s letter seeks “all State Department records relating to Hunter Biden, Devon Archer, Christopher Heinz, and Karen Tramontano,” as well as “all State Department records relating to Burisma Holdings, Rosemont Seneca Partners,

Rosemont Seneca Bohai LLC, Rosemont Capital, and Blue Star Strategies.” The letter also seeks to determine if any of the meetings cited to—including the one between Tramontano and Novelli, the one between Devin Archer and Secretary Kerry, the one between Hunter Biden and Anthony Blinken—ever took place.

Finally, the letter notes that emails indicated that the U.S. had already determined Burisma to be “corrupt” and ask that this determination be explained, if true. Grassley and Johnson end by quizzing the State Department as to whether they bothered to request “the Office of the Legal Adviser or the Office of Inspector General [to] review potential concerns and conflicts of interest related to Hunter Biden’s work for Burisma while Vice President Biden reportedly acted as the United States’ top official in Ukraine.” If the State Department had not, the letter demands that the State Department explain.

Johnson and Grassley’s letter reveals how the State Department was well aware of Hunter’s board position at Burisma, as were others on the periphery, suggesting any theory that Joe did not know of his son’s role is likely false. Additionally, we now know the consulting firm hired by Burisma attempted to leverage Hunter’s role with Burisma in order to land a coveted meeting with the U.S. State Department. The latest emails also demonstrate that Hunter and Archer were both scheduling meetings with high-ranking officials in the State Department. If they discussed Burisma during those potential meetings, it would be a heavy indication that Burisma had hired Hunter to gain access to the nucleus of U.S. foreign policy and to exert their influence on it.

Despite the obvious leveraging, it is unclear how greatly Hunter’s involvement with the company ultimately influenced the State Department’s willingness to meet with Blue Star and whether the meeting between Tramonto of Blue Star and Under Secretary Novelli ever took place. However, answering such questions is critical for determining the extent to which, if at all, Hunter Biden may have sold access to the U.S. State Department. In light of these revelations, Hunter Biden’s salary of \$50,000 per month at Burisma suddenly seems to make much more sense.

Given the tenor of the final questions posed by Grassley and Johnson, it is entirely possible that the State Department turned a blind eye to the conflict of interest that erupted between Hunter and Joe. The American people deserve to know if Joe Biden put the State Department up for sale while serving as Vice President from 2008 to

2016, and Grassley and Johnson's letter is the first step in making such a determination.

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