

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 2, 2021

Mr. Pat Cipollone
White House Counsel
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Cipollone,

I am writing to follow up on my previous letters regarding the pardon of Michael Flynn and reports that President Trump is interested in preemptive pardons for his family members. Now, I would like to express my concern at President Trump's recent pardons of 26 individuals, many of whom were personal associates of the President. It appears from these recent pardons that the usual application process has been shunted in favor of personal and political appeals to President Trump.

The recipients of President Trump's recent pardons included Roger Stone who was convicted of obstruction of Congress among other items, former campaign chairman Paul Manafort who was convicted of illegal foreign lobbying among other items, White House senior adviser Jared Kushner's father, Charles Kushner who was convicted of tax evasion among other items, people who pleaded guilty in the special counsel's Russia investigation – further linking President Trump's political vexation with that investigation to his pardon decisions, Blackwater guards convicted of killing Iraqi civilians, and former members of Congress convicted of corruption.^{[1][2]} For the most part, these individuals have not shown remorse or demonstrated their being worthy of a presidential pardon aside from their good fortune to be personally connected to President Trump.

Prior to the most recent pardons on December 23, about 92 percent of President Trump's pardons went to individuals with personal ties to the president or to his political allies.^[3] The presidential pardon power was placed into the Constitution for a real purpose – to right wrongs, relieve injustices, and provide second chances to those who are repentant and deserve relief. President Trump appears to prefer using presidential pardons to bestow favors upon his allies.

President Trump's preference to use the pardon power for personal and political contacts is partly why my Presidential Pardon Transparency Act is crucial. My bill would require that the Attorney General publish the name, date, and full text of a presidential pardon no later than three days after

^[1] [Trump issues 26 new pardons, including for Stone, Manafort and Charles Kushner](#). *CNN*. December 23, 2020.

^[2] [Trump Pardons Two Russia Inquiry Figures and Blackwater Guards](#). *New York Times*. December 22, 2020.

^[3] [Trump Issues 26 More Pardons, Including to Paul Manafort, Roger Stone](#). *Wall Street Journal*. December 24, 2020.

it's issued.^[4] This wave of presidential pardons has demonstrated the need for the Presidential Pardon Transparency Act to be passed into law.

As we move into the remaining weeks of the Trump Administration, I am concerned that President Trump will continue these pardons of his personal associates. President Trump has also reportedly expressed interest in issuing pardons preemptively for his family members and himself.^[5] Pardons of this unprecedentedly self-serving nature are not in the national interest, nor do they fulfill the intended purpose of the presidential pardon power.

In light of these concerns, I request the following information:

1. Is the White House committed to publicly announcing all presidential pardons prior to their issuance, including the names of recipients and the full text of each pardon?
2. What is the process by which the White House is vetting potential presidential pardon candidates?
3. Why has President Trump has been focused on pardoning personal associates?
4. What safeguards are in place to shield the pardon process from bribery or coercion?
5. Is the White House reviewing potential pardons for the President or any of his family members? If so, for what potential charges is the President considering such pardons?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raja Krishnamoorthi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Raja" being particularly prominent.

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

^[4] [H.R.1348 - Presidential Pardon Transparency Act of 2019](#). *Congress.gov*.

^[5] [As Trump wrestles with defeat, pardons loom for allies -- and himself](#). *CNN*. November 12, 2020.