

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 26, 2025

Mr. Steven Stebbins
Acting Inspector General
Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22350-1500

Ms. Tamara A. Johnson
Acting Inspector General of the Intelligence Community
Investigations Division
Reston 3
Washington, D.C. 20511

Mr. Will Brown
Acting Inspector General
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road, Room 1300
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Ms. Sandra J. Lewis
Acting Inspector General
Department of State
1700 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Acting Inspector General Stebbins, Acting Inspector General Johnson, Acting Inspector General Brown, and Acting Inspector Lewis,

We are writing to express our grave concern with the information reported in a March 25, 2025 news article by Jeffrey Goldberg in *The Atlantic*, “The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans.” If this article is accurate, as the NSC spokesperson indicated it is, it appears that multiple cabinet officials may have violated laws and regulations related to the handling of classified and sensitive information and the retention of federal records. We urge each of your offices to open a full investigation into the matter and to provide criminal referrals to the Department of Justice to the extent such action is supported by the evidence.

Mr. Goldberg’s article shares a first-hand account of being included in a Signal group chat in which cabinet officials engaged in sensitive policy and military deliberations, shared classified information, and unwittingly revealed this information to the press. In several instances, Mr. Goldberg writes that he deliberately removed details from his reporting to avoid the spillage of

classified information. These omissions, he writes, include “information that might be interpreted as related to actual and current intelligence operations,” as well as “precise information about weapons packages, targets, and timing” related to military strikes conducted in Yemen.

We note that classified information is designated as such because its release would significantly damage U.S. national security and put at risk our national security personnel. As such, this information can only be shared in a sensitive compartmented facility and that such operational information is classified at least the SECRET level or higher based on the Department of Defense’s own guidance. Disclosing classified information on an unsecured messaging group chat, which contained an uncleared individual, could be a violation of 18 U.S. Code § 798. We are unaware of any report to the Department of Justice associated with this event, which is a standard practice when classified information is leaked to the media.

Additionally, the Presidential Records Act and the Federal Records Act govern the disposition of official records in the Executive branch. The article includes the summation of a policy debate between multiple cabinet officials on the morning of March 14, 2025. This discussion included substantial debate over the use of force targeting the Houthis, and how this military operation might support or hinder the Administration’s objectives in Europe. Communications about government business between the Vice President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, and senior White House officials are subject to the Presidential Records Act and Federal Records Act. Further, it is not clear how a Signal group chat set to delete messages within a week could allow for the retention of these records.

This report, if accurate, indicates multiple violations of law and policy by a host of elected and confirmed officials responsible for national security issues. Given that this was an accidental disclosure, it also raises the potential that the officials involved in this chat may be conducting other potentially classified and unlawful conversations on this messaging application. We respectfully request that your offices open an investigation to these events and any larger systemic issues and provide regular updates to Congress on your independent investigation.

Sincerely,



Christopher A. Coons
Ranking Member
Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations



Gary C. Peters
Ranking Member
Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs Committee



Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Foreign Relations Committee



Brian Schatz
Ranking Member
State, Foreign Operations, & Related
Programs Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations



Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations