



One Hundred Sixteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 22, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

I write today to request documents and information regarding the decision by the Trump Administration to permit Mr. Nigel Farage to travel to the United States from the United Kingdom, apparently for the purpose of enabling him to attend a rally staged by the presidential campaign of President Trump in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

On March 14, 2020, President Trump issued a Proclamation stating that, “The United States Government is unable to effectively evaluate and monitor all of the travelers continuing to arrive from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland” and that “[t]he potential for undetected transmission” of COVID-19 by individuals from those areas “threatens the security of our transportation system and infrastructure and the national security.” The Proclamation suspended entry into the United States “as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of all aliens who were physically present within the United Kingdom, excluding overseas territories outside of Europe, or the Republic of Ireland during the 14-day period preceding their entry or attempted entry into the United States.”¹

Mr. Nigel Farage is the Leader of the Brexit Party in the United Kingdom.² Mr. Farage was previously a Member of the European Parliament representing England, but his term in office ended in January 2020.³ News reports indicate that Mr. Farage “was denied boarding while trying to fly from the UK to the US on Friday” but was subsequently granted permission by the Trump

¹ The White House, Proclamation on the Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Certain Additional Persons Who Pose a Risk of Transmitting Coronavirus (March 14, 2020) (online at www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-suspension-entry-immigrants-nonimmigrants-certain-additional-persons-pose-risk-transmitting-coronavirus-2/).

² The Brexit Party, (accessed on June 22, 2020) (online at <https://www.thebrexitparty.org/message-from-nigel/>).

³ European Parliament-9th Parliamentary Term, Nigel Farage-MEP, United Kingdom (accessed on June 22, 2020) (online at www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/4525/NIGEL_FARAGE/history/9#detailedcardmep).

Administration to fly to the United States from the United Kingdom.⁴ Media reports also confirm that Mr. Farage appeared at the President’s Tulsa rally. One such report stated:

“The first images of Mr Farage emerged late on Saturday in the UK, showing the 56-year-old preparing in a tent backstage at the rally, in preparation for the ‘Team Trump on Tour’ part of proceedings—a series of panel discussions for the waiting crowd outside.”⁵

Over the weekend, my staff requested further information from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) regarding Mr. Farage’s travel to the U.S. In an email, staff from CBP provided to my staff the following statement:

“The U.S. Department of Homeland Security continues to implement robust policies to slow the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic across U.S. borders while ensuring the flow of lawful trade and travel. On June 19, Mr. Nigel Farage, the leader of the United Kingdom’s Brexit Party, was denied boarding while attempting to fly from the United Kingdom to the United States. The initial denial of boarding was made pursuant to a March 14 Presidential Proclamation that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, suspends the entry into the United States of certain foreign nationals who recently have been present in the United Kingdom. After conducting a thorough review of the relevant facts and circumstances, DHS determined Mr. Farage’s travel to be permissible under Section 2 (a)(xi) of the Presidential Proclamation: any alien whose entry would be in the national interest, as determined by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or their designees authorizing Mr. Farage to board his flight.”⁶

The decision of the Trump Administration to admit Mr. Farage to the United States to enable him to attend a campaign rally at a time when most travel from the United Kingdom to the U.S. has been suspended raises numerous troubling questions, as does the claim that such travel was in the national interest. To enable the Committee to understand the full circumstances regarding the travel of Mr. Farage to the U.S., the Committee requests that DHS provide by Friday, June 26, 2020, all communication from March 14, 2020, to the present referring or relating to travel to the United States by Mr. Farage, including:

1. All communication among DHS employees and between and among DHS employees and employees of any other Federal department and agency;
2. All communication between any employee of DHS and any employee or volunteer of President Trump’s campaign; and

⁴ Business Insider, *Brexit leader Nigel Farage was briefly denied flight boarding to attend Trump rally until the US deemed his travel as 'in the national interest'* (June 21, 2020) (online at www.businessinsider.com/nigel-farage-us-travel-exception-trump-rally-2020-6).

⁵ Daily Mail, *Nigel Farage was stopped from boarding the flight to US amid travel ban but was finally allowed to attend Trump rally under 'national interest' clause, officials reveal* (June 21, 2020) (online at www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8444747/Nigel-Farage-allowed-attend-Trump-rally-national-clause-officials-reveal.html).

⁶ Email from Staff, Customs and Border Protection, to Staff, Committee on Homeland Security (June 21, 2010).

3. All communication between any employee of DHS and any White House employee.

I also request that DHS provide by June 26 all documents from March 14, 2020, to the present referring or relating to:

1. Any disapproval of travel to the United States by Mr. Farage from the United Kingdom or any other location from which travel to the U.S. was then suspended;
2. Any approval of travel to the United States by Mr. Farage from the United Kingdom or any other location from which travel to the U.S. was then suspended, including any approval that reversed a prior disapproval;
3. All individuals at the GS-15 level or above involved in reviewing and approving and/or disapproving travel to the United States by Mr. Farage, including reversing any prior disapproval;
4. The individual who ultimately approved travel to the U.S. by Mr. Farage in June 2020;
5. Analysis of Mr. Farage's proposed travel in June 2020 to assess the application of the national interest standards pursuant to the Presidential Proclamation of March 14; and
6. The determination and justification that travel to the United States by Mr. Farage in June 2020 was a matter of national interest.

Finally, I request that DHS provide by June 26 all documents referring or relating to any foreign nationals permitted to travel to the U.S. under an exemption granted in accordance with Section 2 (a)(xi) of the Presidential Proclamation of March 14.

I appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Chairman