



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

August 10, 2023

Mr. Patrick J. Lechleitner  
Acting Director  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
500 12th Street, S.W., Mail Stop 5003  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Acting Director Lechleitner:

The Committee on Homeland Security continues to conduct oversight of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) contracts related to housing and supervision of illegal migrants encountered at the southwest border.<sup>1</sup> The Committee remains concerned that the Biden administration awards massive contracts to nonprofits linked to the President's transition team following the 2020 election.<sup>2</sup> Recent reporting suggests that despite serious conflicts of interest, former Biden administration official Mr. Andrew Lorenzen-Strait is involved in federal contracts for migrant services.<sup>3</sup>

On January 20, 2021, Family Endeavors, Inc. (Endeavors) named Mr. Lorenzen-Strait the Senior Director for Migrant Services and Federal Affairs.<sup>4</sup> Immediately preceding his position with Endeavors, Mr. Lorenzen-Strait served on the Biden-Harris transition team. He is also a former official at ICE.<sup>5</sup> In March 2021, just two months after Mr. Lorenzen-Strait joined Endeavors, ICE awarded an \$86.9 million sole source contract to Endeavors to provide beds and

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from John Katko, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Homeland Sec. to Tae D. Johnson, Acting Dir. for U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't, (Dec. 7, 2022); Letter from Mark Green, Chairman, H. Comm. on Homeland Sec. to Tae D. Johnson, Acting Dir. For U.S. Immigr. And Customs Enf't (Jan. 30, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> See Letter from James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and John Katko, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Homeland Sec. to Xavier Becerra, Sec., Dep't of Health and Human Serv. (Apr. 21, 2021), available at <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Letter-to-Secretary-Becerra-on-HHS-Family-Endeavors-Contract-042121.pdf> (outlining the Committees' initial concern with Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's role in the Department of Health and Human Services awarding a sole source contract to Endeavors).

<sup>3</sup> Project Veritas (@Project\_Veritas), TWITTER (Aug. 8, 2023, 7:00 PM), [https://twitter.com/Project\\_Veritas/status/1689048983858024448](https://twitter.com/Project_Veritas/status/1689048983858024448).

<sup>4</sup> Press Release, Endeavors, Endeavors Names Andrew Lorenzen-Strait As The Senior Director For Migrant Services & Federal Affairs (Jan. 20, 2021) (on file with author).

<sup>5</sup> Anna Giaritelli, *EXCLUSIVE: ICE Gave \$87M No-Bid Contract To Business With Biden Ties, Raising Conflict Of Interest Questions*, WASH. EXAMINER, Apr. 7, 2021, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/biden-ice-gave-87m-no-bid-contract-conflict-of-interest>.

services in hotels for illegal migrants crossing the southwest border.<sup>6</sup> In April 2021, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) began a review of ICE's sole source contract with Endeavors.<sup>7</sup>

On April 12, 2022, the OIG issued a report, finding that ICE did not adequately justify the need for its sole source contract with Endeavors and spent nearly \$17 million on hotel space and services that went largely unused.<sup>8</sup> The OIG noted that Endeavors sent ICE a proposal for housing migrant families without ICE requesting such a proposal.<sup>9</sup> The OIG also found that Endeavors "had no experience providing the services covered by the sole source contract"<sup>10</sup> and that ICE provided "no documentation to show that Endeavors had the capability to provide such services."<sup>11</sup> The OIG's findings raise important questions about Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's involvement in the contract proposal.

It is unclear whether Mr. Lorenzen-Strait even had authority to engage Endeavors in a contract with ICE or whether ICE ever evaluated any conflict of interest created by Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's participation in the contract.<sup>12</sup> In September 2022, amid intense scrutiny over Endeavors' federal contracts, Andrew Lorenzen Strait resigned from his position.<sup>13</sup>

On August 8, 2023, journalists with Project Veritas released a video of Mr. Lorenzen-Strait cavalierly bragging about his participation in government contracts related to migrant services.<sup>14</sup> Specifically, Mr. Lorenzen-Strait referred to what appears to be the Endeavors contract as a "corrupt bargain."<sup>15</sup> He further discussed "brokering" a deal that won Cherokee Federal, a team of tribally owned federal contracting companies, a nearly \$2 billion contract with the federal government to provide services to unaccompanied alien children.<sup>16</sup> In the video, Mr.

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<sup>6</sup> DEP'T OF HOMELAND SEC. OFF. OF INSPECTOR GEN., OIG-22-37, ICE SPENT FUNDS ON UNUSED BEDS, MISSED COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AND DETENTION STANDARDS WHILE HOUSING MIGRANT FAMILIES IN HOTELS 2 (2022).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* at 6.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> See 5 C.F.R § 2641.201(a) (prohibiting certain former employees from having communications with a U.S. employee on a matter in which he participated as an employee); Anna Giaritelli, *Former Biden Official Who Won \$87M To House Migrants Banned From ICE Contracts*, WASH. EXAMINER, July 27, 2021, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/biden-transition-official-87-million-house-migrants-banned-working-ice-contracts> (citing a message from an ICE official requesting that Andrew Lorenzen-Strait be removed from a contract because he was not "cleared" to work on the contract).

<sup>13</sup> See Anna Giaritelli, *Biden Transition Official Resigns From Nonprofit Group Given Migrant Housing Contracts*, WASHINGTON EXAMINER, Sept. 13, 2022, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/biden-transition-official-resigns-from-nonprofit-group-given-migrant-housing-contracts#:~:text=Andrew%20Lorenzen%2DStrait%2C%20senior%20director,Eller%2C%20a%20spokesman%20for%20Endeavors> (quoting a spokesman for Endeavors confirming that Lorenzen-Strait resigned).

<sup>14</sup> Project Veritas (@Project\_Veritas), TWITTER (Aug. 8, 2023, 7:00 PM), [https://twitter.com/Project\\_Veritas/status/1689048983858024448](https://twitter.com/Project_Veritas/status/1689048983858024448).

<sup>15</sup> See *id.* (referring to the contracts that Republicans investigated).

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

Lorenzen-Strait admits that Cherokee Federal is not equipped to handle the contract.<sup>17</sup> Mr. Lorenzen-Strait also admits that while he is publicly involved with the company Deep Water Point & Associates, he hides his participation in government contracts through the entities VerdinPoint and The Tanager Group.<sup>18</sup>

Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's comments in the Project Veritas video are deeply disturbing. The Committee is concerned that despite clear conflicts of interest and prior scrutiny, Mr. Lorenzen-Strait may be influencing ICE's contracts for migrant services with non-governmental and non-profit organizations. Additionally, the Committee is concerned with Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's relationships with current ICE contracting officials.

The Committee has been made aware that Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's former subordinate at ICE, Ms. Claire Trickler-McNulty, is now the Assistant Director of the Office of Immigration Program Evaluation. In this position she reviews and approves ICE contracts for migrant housing, supervision, and services. Ms. Trickler-McNulty previously worked with Mr. Lorenzen-Strait in the Custody Programs Office. Additionally, Ms. Trickler-McNulty and Mr. Lorenzen-Strait previously worked together evaluating ICE contract awards. Mr. Lorenzen-Strait's relationship with the current ICE contracting official calls into question ICE's impartiality in contracts.

To assist the Committee in understanding any conflicts of interest in ICE contracts for migrant services, please provide as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 pm on August 24, 2023:

1. All communications, including but not limited to, e-mail, between Claire Trickler-McNulty and Andrew Lorenzen-Strait from November 10, 2020 to the present;
2. All communications between Claire Trickler-McNulty and any employee, representative, or official from VerdinPoint from September 9, 2022 to the present;
3. All communications between Claire Trickler-McNulty and any employee, representative, or official from The Tanager Group from September 9, 2022 to the present;
4. All communications between Claire Trickler-McNulty and any employee, representative, or official from Deep Water Point & Associates from September 9, 2022 to the present;
5. Documents sufficient to show the Office of Immigration Program Evaluation's process for evaluating ICE contracts;

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<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

6. Any and all documents referring or relating to ICE's Technical Evaluation Team evaluation of contracts to establish the Family Case Management Program in 2015; and
7. All organizational charts for the Custody Programs Office from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2019.

An attachment contains instructions for responding to this request. Please contact the Committee on Homeland Security Majority staff at (202) 226-8417 with any questions about this request.

Per Rule X of the U.S House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security is the principal committee of jurisdiction for overall homeland security policy, and has special oversight functions of "all Government activities relating to homeland security, including the interaction of all departments and agencies with the Department of Homeland Security."

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

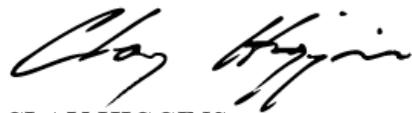
Sincerely,



MARK E. GREEN, M.D.  
Chairman



DAN BISHOP  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight,  
Investigations, and Accountability



CLAY HIGGINS  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Border Security  
and Enforcement

Encl.

cc: The Honorable Bennie Thompson, Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Glenn Ivey, Ranking Member

Acting Director Lechleitner  
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Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and  
Accountability

The Honorable Lou Correa, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Border Security and Enforcement