

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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September 17, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Attorney General of the United States
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Secretary Rubio and Attorney General Blanche:

Despite previous promises of transparency and repeated requests from Congress, the Trump Administration has provided shockingly few details to Congress regarding its management of at least \$13 billion in Venezuelan oil revenue.¹ Last week, President Trump announced an unprecedented financial takeover of another country's natural resources in a partnership deal between the U.S. government and North American Blue Energy Partners (NABEP), a private company led by Venezuelan businessman and alleged money launderer Alejandro Betancourt. Given the numerous corruption allegations surrounding Mr. Betancourt, we demand information on the negotiations that led to this deal. We also demand information about the steps the Department of State and Department of Justice (DOJ) took to pressure a foreign government to resolve an active investigation into Mr. Betancourt's activities, including your personal involvements as Secretary of State and Attorney General.²

On August 28, 2026, President Trump announced that the U.S. would enter a joint venture with NABEP, the second largest oil company in Venezuela.³ Under this deal, the U.S.

¹ See, e.g., *The US Has Collected About \$13bn of Venezuela's Oil Money. Where Is It?*, Financial Times (July 22, 2026) (online at www.ft.com/content/0e562e03-106e-4729-83d7-675c27eb8c4d).

² *A Venezuelan Oilman Faced a Swiss Arrest Warrant. The U.S. Had Other Plans For Him.*, Washington Post (Aug. 27, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/08/27/us-intervened-criminal-probe-venezuelan-oilman-alejandro-betancourt).

³ *Inside Trump's Plan to Give the Pentagon a Stake in Venezuela's Oil Riches*, Wall Street Journal (Aug. 29, 2026) (online at www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/inside-trumps-plan-to-give-the-pentagon-a-stake-in-venezuelas-oil-riches-f054cdc2).

would take 35% equity ownership in NABEP and enjoy preferential rights to buy 20% of the company's production.⁴ The total scope of the deal would make the U.S. the majority owner of a company controlling 17 Venezuelan oil fields holding an estimated 65 billion barrels of oil reserves.⁵ Congress has a right to know who the President has chosen to conduct business with and whether he is collaborating with an alleged criminal with a history of white collar misdeeds.

The Trump Administration has relied on unofficial representatives to achieve its opaque policy goals in Venezuela and positioned President Trump's allies as emissaries to the Venezuelan government. For example, Mauricio Claver-Carone, a former special envoy to Latin America under President Trump, recently played a leading role in shaping Venezuela policy without a formal government position.⁶ Reports show that Mr. Claver-Carone exerted "heavy influence" over billions of dollars of debt restructuring and oil deals in Venezuela and was described as a "viceroy" by government officials and business sources in the U.S. and Venezuela. Mr. Claver-Carone was tapped to serve in this unofficial role, and previously as special envoy to Latin America, by President Trump despite having been fired from his role as head of the Inter-American Development Bank due to misconduct.⁷

Mr. Claver-Carone stepped down from his unofficial role with the U.S. government in July. Since then, Mr. Betancourt appears to have taken a prominent role brokering deals with the de facto government of Venezuela where he styles himself as the "new oil tsar."⁸ Despite a history of problematic conduct and recently being confined to house arrest in the United Kingdom, Mr. Betancourt now serves as an unofficial advisor to the White House on Venezuela while also conducting business in Venezuela.⁹

Mr. Betancourt's long history of questionable business dealings raise alarming questions about what role he could possibly play in crafting American policy or serving as an "important

⁴ *Inside Trump's Plan to Give the Pentagon a Stake in Venezuela's Oil Riches*, Wall Street Journal (Aug. 29, 2026) (online at www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/inside-trumps-plan-to-give-the-pentagon-a-stake-in-venezuelas-oil-riches-f054cdc2).

⁵ *Trump Says He Has Secured a Vast U.S. Stake in Venezuelan Oil Industry*, Washington Post (Aug. 28, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/business/2026/08/28/trump-seeks-vast-potentially-costly-us-stake-venezuelan-oil-industry/).

⁶ *Trump's Unofficial Venezuela Viceroy Shapes U.S. Policy, Raising Oversight Concerns*, Washington Post (May 25, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/05/25/trumps-unofficial-venezuela-viceoy-shapes-us-policy-raising-oversight-concerns/).

⁷ *Id.*; *Trump's Powerful but Unofficial Venezuela Adviser Leaves His Role*, Reuters (July 31, 2026) (online at www.reuters.com/world/trumps-powerful-unofficial-venezuela-adviser-leaves-his-role-2026-07-31/).

⁸ *Venezuelan Oil Man Investigated Overseas is Key Broker for Trump*, The Times (Aug. 22, 2026) (online at www.thetimes.com/world/latin-america/article/venezuelan-oil-man-investigated-overseas-is-key-broker-for-trump-pv0kbjt6m).

⁹ *A Venezuelan Oilman Faced a Swiss Arrest Warrant. The U.S. Had Other Plans for Him*, Washington Post (Aug. 27, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/08/27/us-intervened-criminal-probe-venezuelan-oilman-alejandro-betancourt/); *Venezuelan Oil Man Investigated Overseas is Key Broker for Trump*, The Times (Aug. 22, 2026) (online at www.thetimes.com/world/latin-america/article/venezuelan-oil-man-investigated-overseas-is-key-broker-for-trump-pv0kbjt6m).

ally” of the U.S.¹⁰ During the Venezuelan energy crisis, Mr. Betancourt’s firm, Derwick Associates, won \$5 billion in no-bid contracts from Hugo Chávez’s socialist government—a deal for which Derwick levied \$2.9 billion in excessive charges according to Transparency International.¹¹ In 2019, the *Miami Herald* identified Mr. Betancourt as an unnamed conspirator in a \$1.2 billion money laundering and bribery scheme brought by DOJ.¹² Currently, authorities in Spain are investigating Mr. Betancourt over a \$4.3 billion money laundering and tax evasion scheme.¹³ Swiss prosecutors are also seeking Mr. Betancourt’s extradition over allegations that he used European banks to launder billions in funds belonging to the Venezuelan people.¹⁴

Within this context, recent reporting has indicated that each of you took concerted steps to orchestrate Mr. Betancourt’s release from house arrest and extradition to Switzerland.¹⁵ Reports indicate that former Attorney General Pam Bondi, Deputy Attorney General Colin McDonald, and you, Attorney General Blanche, have all contacted foreign governments to encourage them to end their criminal investigations into Mr. Betancourt and allow him to travel to the U.S. The State Department, led by you, Secretary Rubio, dispatched Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau to make contact with the Swiss government and advocate on Mr. Betancourt’s behalf.¹⁶

The Trump Administration’s actions in Venezuela have outstepped its legal authority and resisted any and all forms of oversight, transparency, and accountability. The Trump Administration has also pulled multiple levers to extricate their chosen envoy from international legal jeopardy. As a result, the American and Venezuelan people cannot trust that the representatives of their governments are not potential criminals pursuing their own personal interests.

To better understand who the Trump Administration has trusted as its advisors and emissaries to Venezuela, we ask that you provide the following information and a briefing to Congress by October 1, 2026:

¹⁰ *A Venezuelan Oilman Faced a Swiss Arrest Warrant. The U.S. Had Other Plans for Him*, Washington Post (Aug. 27, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/08/27/us-intervened-criminal-probe-venezuelan-oilman-alejandro-betancourt).

¹¹ *Id.*; *Venezuelan Oil Man Investigated Overseas is Key Broker for Trump*, The Times (Aug. 22, 2026) (online at www.thetimes.com/world/latin-america/article/venezuelan-oil-man-investigated-overseas-is-key-broker-for-trump-pv0kbjt6m).

¹² *A Venezuelan Oilman Faced a Swiss Arrest Warrant. The U.S. Had Other Plans for Him*, Washington Post (Aug. 27, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/08/27/us-intervened-criminal-probe-venezuelan-oilman-alejandro-betancourt).

¹³ *Venezuelan Oil Man Investigated Overseas is Key Broker for Trump*, The Times (Aug. 22, 2026) (online at www.thetimes.com/world/latin-america/article/venezuelan-oil-man-investigated-overseas-is-key-broker-for-trump-pv0kbjt6m).

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *A Venezuelan Oilman Faced a Swiss Arrest Warrant. The U.S. Had Other Plans for Him*, Washington Post (Aug. 27, 2026) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/08/27/us-intervened-criminal-probe-venezuelan-oilman-alejandro-betancourt).

¹⁶ *Id.*

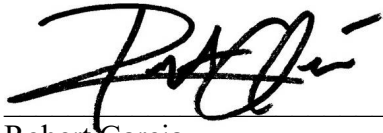
1. A list of individuals, including their titles and roles, involved in negotiations between the U.S. and NABEP, including conversations and communications with any of the following individuals:
 - a. Marco Rubio;
 - b. Todd Blanche;
 - c. Pam Bondi;
 - d. Colin McDonald;
 - e. Christopher Landau;
2. A detailed description of the roles of Mauricio Claver-Carone and Alejandro Betancourt in the federal government since January 21, 2025;
3. All documents regarding Bluewave Properties Ltd.¹⁷, NABEP, and Operation Money Flight;
4. All communications between the White House, DOJ, and the State Department regarding Mauricio Claver-Carone and Alejandro Betancourt;
5. All communications between DOJ or the State Department and Mauricio Claver-Carone;
6. All communications between DOJ or the State Department and Alejandro Betancourt;
7. All communications between DOJ and any foreign governments and supranational governing bodies, including but not limited to INTERPOL, the European Union, and Inter-American Bank regarding Alejandro Betancourt or Mauricio Claver-Carone; and
8. All communications between the State Department and any foreign governments regarding Mauricio Claver-Carone or Alejandro Betancourt.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. The House Foreign Affairs Committee also has broad jurisdiction under House Rule X over relations of the United States with foreign nations generally, and over international commodity agreements, measures to foster commercial

¹⁷ Harry Sargeant III, who previously served as a go-between for the U.S. and Venezuela, was reportedly pressured by the Trump Administration to sell Bluewave Properties Ltd., through which he owned a minority stake in NABEP. See *Sargeant Said to Exit Venezuela Oil Stake Amid Pressure Campaign*, EnergyNow (Aug. 10, 2026) (online at <https://energynow.ca/2026/08/sargeant-said-to-exit-venezuela-oil-stake-amid-pressure-campaign>).

intercourse with foreign nations, and international economic policy. The Committee on Natural Resources has broad jurisdiction over petroleum conservation on public lands, mineral land laws and claims and entries thereunder, and mining interests generally under House Rule X. If you have any questions about this request, please contact the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Robert Garcia
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform



Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Affairs



Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Brian Mast, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources