

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 6, 2026

The Honorable Robert Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

We write regarding your reported role in President Trump's decision to grant convicted fraudster Trevor Milton a full presidential pardon.¹ Public reports of high-profile individuals—including yourself—appealing directly to the President on behalf of pardon recipients risk subversion of the established pardon review processes by financial influence and political access.

In 2023, Mr. Milton was convicted of securities fraud and wire fraud offenses.² Evidence presented at trial established that he engaged in a scheme to defraud and mislead investors regarding technology and products that his company, Nikola Corporation, produced.³ Mr. Milton was sentenced to four years in custody and ordered to pay a \$1,000,000 fine.⁴ U.S. District Court Judge Edgardo Ramos ordered restitution but deferred setting the amount pending additional information from the parties; federal prosecutors subsequently sought \$661,000,000 for his victims.⁵ The victims of Mr. Milton's fraud include individuals who lost their retirement savings and others who had never invested in the stock market before.⁶

On March 27, 2025, President Trump granted Mr. Milton a presidential pardon, eliminating any obligation to pay court-ordered restitution to his victims.⁷ Mr. Milton did not serve any of his prison sentence.⁸

¹ See Marisa Taylor, *Forget the DOJ; For a Trump Pardon, Call 'Bobby' and Other Influencers*, REUTERS (June 11, 2026), <https://www.reuters.com/investigations/forget-doj-trump-pardon-call-bobby-other-influencers-2026-06-11/>.

² See Press Release, *Trevor Milton Sentenced To Four Years In Prison For Securities Fraud Scheme*, U.S. Att'y's Off., S. Dist. NY. (Dec. 18, 2023), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/trevor-milton-sentenced-four-years-prisonsecurities-fraud-scheme>.

³ See *id.*

⁴ See *id.*

⁵ Steve Goldstein & Lukas I. Alpert, *Nikola founder Trevor Milton may have cost investors more than half a billion dollars. Trump just pardoned him.*, MARKETWATCH, (Mar. 28, 2025), <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/hereshow-much-retail-investors-allegedly-lost-from-trevor-milton-who-says-he-was-pardoned-50b57ff2>; Matt Novak, *Trump Pardoned Him. Now He Won't Have to Pay Back \$660 Million*, GIZMODO (Sept. 19, 2025), <https://gizmodo.com/trump-pardoned-him-now-he-wont-have-to-pay-back-660-million-2000661542>.

⁶ Beth Reinhard and Aaron Schafer, *Trump's pardons wipe out payments to defrauded victims*, WASH. POST (Dec. 19, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/12/19/donald-trump-pardons-trevor-milton-nikola/>.

⁷ Executive Grant of Clemency, *Donald J. Trump to Trevor Milton* (Mar. 27, 2025), <https://www.justice.gov/pardon/media/1395001/dl?inline>.

⁸ See Christopher Kuo and Ben Foldy, *Pardoned for Fraud, a CEO Mounts His Comeback: 'We Can Trust You Now'*, WSJ (Mar. 17, 2026), <https://www.wsj.com/business/trevor-milton-pardon-nikola-trump-3163e19c>.

Article II, Section 2, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution authorizes the President to “grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.”⁹ The U.S. Supreme Court has characterized executive clemency as “an act of grace” exercised for the “public welfare.”¹⁰ President Trump’s use of this authority appears to deviate from this traditional purpose.

According to public reporting, you personally appealed to the President to grant Mr. Milton a pardon, arguing that he had been unfairly prosecuted by the previous administration’s Justice Department.¹¹ Days before granting Mr. Milton’s pardon request, President Trump reportedly told him to call you and thank you for convincing the President to grant him a pardon.¹²

Your reported involvement in this matter is particularly troubling, given that Mr. Milton reportedly donated \$750,000 to the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Political Action Committee (PAC), which was launched in late 2024 by senior members of your presidential campaign to unite your supporters behind President Trump.¹³

Public reporting also indicates that Mr. Milton and his wife donated approximately \$1,800,000 to President Trump’s 2024 reelection campaign a month before the election.¹⁴

Congress has a compelling interest in ensuring that the constitutional pardon power is exercised with fairness and transparency. Given these circumstances, we are seeking additional information to better understand the extent to which influence and access have overridden the standard pardon review process. Please provide written responses to the following questions no later than October 20, 2026.

1. When did you meet Mr. Milton and what is the nature of your relationship?
2. Did you, directly or through others, ask President Trump, directly or through others, to grant a pardon to Mr. Milton? Did you issue similar requests for any of Mr. Milton’s codefendants?
3. Did Mr. Milton, or anyone else, request that you appeal to the President or the Trump Administration on his behalf to secure a pardon?

⁹ U.S. CONST. ART. II, § 2, CL. 1.

¹⁰ *Ex parte Garland*, 71 U.S. 333 (1866); *Biddle v. Perovich*, 274 U.S. 480 (1927).

¹¹ See Taylor, *supra* note 1.

¹² See *id.*

¹³ Nathaniel Weixel, *GOP Gambles on Midterm Dividends from RFK Jr.’s MAHA*, THE HILL (Aug. 30, 2026), <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/6058532-trump-maha-midterm-impact/>.

¹⁴ See Matt Ott, *Convicted of Bilking Investors, Nikola Founder and Trump Donor Gets a Presidential Pardon*, AP NEWS (Mar. 28, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/nikola-trevor-milton-fraud-trump-pardon-3fceb0a3820cecb205656f2dc3f6764>.

4. Have you spoken to any of the victims of Mr. Milton's crimes, such as the individuals who lost their retirement savings?
5. Were you aware of Mr. Milton's \$750,000 payment to the MAHA Alliance PAC or his \$1.8 million payment to a joint fundraising committee supporting President Trump's 2024 campaign when you appealed to the President on his behalf?
6. Have you advocated for or been involved in any other clemency decisions during this administration? If yes, please describe the nature of your involvement, including the individual or company you advocated for and any financial or political connections you may have to this individual or company.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Dave Min
Member of Congress



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress