

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

December 18, 2020

Antony Blinken  
Co-Founder and Managing Partner  
WestExec Advisors  
875 15th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Michele Flournoy  
Co-Founder and Managing Partner  
WestExec Advisors  
875 15th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Sergio Aguirre  
Co-Founder and Managing Partner  
WestExec Advisors  
875 15th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Nitin Chadda  
Co-Founder and Managing Partner  
WestExec Advisors  
875 15th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Blinken, Ms. Flournoy, Mr. Aguirre, and Mr. Chadda:

Over the past several weeks, the Biden-Harris Transition Team has been announcing individuals, which a Biden-Harris Administration would nominate to serve. Among those so far include individuals from WestExec Advisors, a consulting firm, which claims to “bring[] the Situation Room to the Board Room.”<sup>1</sup> Individuals from WestExec Advisors who have either been explicitly named or suggested include Antony Blinken for Secretary of State and Avril Haines for Director of National Intelligence. WestExec Advisors, however, has been described as a “secretive consulting firm”<sup>2</sup> with foreign ties and undisclosed clients lists. Such allegations raise significant conflicts of interest and transparency questions, especially for these individuals who may serve in a future administration. In light of these concerns, we write to request documents and information.

Recent reports about WestExec Advisors describe a consulting firm, which touts its prior national security experience while obscuring its work and clients. WestExec reportedly scrubbed references from its website to its China-related work before Mr. Blinken was proposed as the

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<sup>1</sup> WestExec Advisors, What We Do, [WestExec Advisors | Strategic Advisory Firm in DC](#), last visited Dec. 7, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan Bender and Theodoric Meyer, “The secretive consulting firm that’s become Biden’s Cabinet in waiting,” *Politico*, November 23, 2020, available at, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/23/westexec-advisors-biden-cabinet-440072>.

Secretary of State nominee in a Biden-Harris Administration.<sup>3</sup> The Biden-Harris Transition Team has omitted Mr. Blinken's and Ms. Haines' role and relationship with WestExec Advisors from their biographies on the transition website.<sup>4</sup> Further, many of WestExec's principals and advisors have refused to post on its website or release its client lists.<sup>5</sup> And they have failed to describe the exact nature of their consulting work for their clients.<sup>6</sup> WestExec Advisors refusal to disclose the nature of their work and clients is disconcerting, especially when it trades on its prior government experience highlighting its relationship to the White House's Situation Room to promote its business. It is even more disconcerting when its cofounders, managing partners, and advisors are being selected as potential nominees for national security positions in a future administration.

Americans deserve to know the qualifications and experience of the unelected officials nominated and selected to serve them. Public servants must be impartial and impervious to outside influences. Therefore, to assist the Committee in understanding whether any potential Biden-Harris Transition Team nominees have disqualifying conflicts of interest, please provide documents and information sufficient to answer the following questions by December 30, 2020:

1. All clients, including but not limited to foreign governments, for whom any potential nominee or appointee for a Biden-Harris Administration has performed services or has been employed by a firm performing such services;
2. Whether any clients for whom any potential Biden-Harris nominee or appointee has performed services, including lobbying and consulting, are foreign-owned or directed;
3. Any recusals and divestments planned by incoming Biden-Harris Administration nominees or appointees;
4. Any potential conflicts of interest posed by work performed by incoming Biden-Harris Administration nominees or appointees for government contractors or outside interests; and,
5. Disclosure of the amount of compensation received for any consulting, lobbying, or other work performed by Biden-Harris nominees or appointees.

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<sup>3</sup> Yuichiro Kakutani, *Dem Cabinet Nom for State Department Cofounded Consulting Firm WestExec*, WASH. FREE BEACON, Dec. 2, 2020, available at [Biden-Linked Firm WestExec Scrubs China Work From Website - Washington Free Beacon](#).

<sup>4</sup> Biden-Harris Transition, Nominees and Appointees, Antony Blinken, available at <https://buildbackbetter.gov/nominees-and-appointees/antony-blinken/>, last accessed, December 7, 2020 and Biden-Harris Transition, Nominees and Appointees, Avril Haines, available at <https://buildbackbetter.gov/nominees-and-appointees/avril-haines/>, last accessed, December 7, 2020.

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

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

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "C".

James Comer  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Oversight and Reform

cc: The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney, Chairwoman  
House Committee on Oversight and Reform