

Coalition for Integrity

Conflict of Interest Controversies Continue to Plague the White House

June 15, 2017. In January, [we called](#) on President Trump to demonstrate that his administration would operate transparently and with integrity. These are the basic standards to which American citizens hold their presidents and other elected officials. Specifically, we called on him to honor two commitments he made to the public: Fully separating his businesses from government and disclosing his tax returns. At his January 11 press conference, Trump's lawyer Sherri Dillon [described steps](#) that he would take, prior to his inauguration, to separate his business from government.

More than six months later, [it's clear](#) that President Trump has done little (if anything) to truly separate himself from his business interests. He also has continued to refuse to disclose his tax returns. In April, Pro Publica [reported](#) that the president's connection to his companies remains deeper than ever, and that he can pull money from his businesses whenever he wants.

As a result of his failure to truly separate himself from his businesses, President Trump has faced one conflict-of-interest controversy after another. To witness: Nearly 200 Democratic lawmakers [filed suit](#) against President Trump, "alleging that by retaining interests in a global business empire he has violated constitutional restrictions on taking gifts and benefits from foreign leaders." Attorneys General for the District of Columbia and Maryland [filed a similar suit](#), alleging that he has violated anti-corruption laws by accepting millions in payments and benefits from foreign governments since taking office.

The president's conflicts extend beyond these emoluments lawsuits to Trump business transactions. A [recent report](#) found that 70 percent of buyers of Trump real estate properties are anonymously held limited liability companies (LLCs) – prior to Trump taking office, LLCs constituted just four percent of buyers of Trump properties. This means that the public has no way of knowing who is purchasing Trump properties. On top of that news comes [another story](#) that China recently granted approval of nine Donald Trump trademarks it had previously rejected. This decision fueled speculation that the Chinese government may be seeking ways to curry favor with the Trump administration.

Perhaps most shocking is the fact that these latest conflict-of-interest controversies were reported over the course of *just one week!* And unless the president fully separates himself from his businesses, stories like this will continue to surface at a regular clip. We continue our call for President Trump to honor the commitment he made to fully separate himself from his businesses and focus on serving in the public's interest.