

and those in his orbit from criminal investigations by the Manhattan US Attorney's office. Trump and his legal team have long harbored concerns that investigations by New York federal prosecutors - which could last throughout his presidency - may ultimately pose more danger to him, his family and his allies than the inquiry by special counsel Robert Mueller, according to people close to Trump.

### [These Secret Files Show How The Trump Moscow Talks Unfolded While Trump Heaped Praise On Putin](#)

**Azeen Ghorayshi et al., BuzzFeed News**

As a candidate, Donald Trump had a lot of praise for Vladimir Putin - and no business, he kept insisting, in Russia. These documents tell a different story.

### [Fight the ship: Death and valor on a warship doomed by its own Navy.](#)

**T. Christian Miller et al., ProPublica**

A little after 1:30 a.m. on June 17, 2017, Alexander Vaughan tumbled from his bunk onto the floor of his sleeping quarters on board the Navy destroyer USS Fitzgerald. The shock of cold, salty water snapped him awake.

---

## **White House & Administration**

### [U.S. Trade Negotiators Heading to Beijing Next Week](#)

**Bob Davis and Vivian Salama, The Wall Street Journal**

The U.S. is dispatching its chief trade negotiator, Robert Lighthizer, and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to Beijing early next week to continue trade talks as a March 1 deadline to reach an accord nears, a senior Trump administration official said Tuesday. The senior official also said President Trump hasn't yet committed to meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping-a shift from Mr. Trump's comments last week.

### [Top U.S. Commander in Mideast Wasn't Consulted on Syria Pullout](#)

**Nancy A. Youssef, The Wall Street Journal**

The top U.S. military commander for the Middle East said President Trump didn't discuss with him the withdrawal of all American troops from Syria before announcing the decision, a move that has rattled allies and stirred fears of a possible Islamic State resurgence. Army Gen. Joseph Votel, head of the

military's Central Command, made his comments Tuesday while testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee, telling Sen. Angus King (I., Maine), "I was not consulted."

### [The plan to keep Trump's taxes hidden](#)

**Nancy Cook, Politico**

The new House Democratic majority is widely expected to test one of Donald Trump's ultimate red lines by demanding the president's personal tax returns - and the Trump administration has been gearing up for months to fight back hard. Trump's Treasury Department is readying plans to drag the expected Democratic request for Trump's past tax filings, which he has closely guarded, into a quagmire of arcane legal arguments.

### [Trump, Kushner met with contractors to discuss building border wall](#)

**Kaitlan Collins, CNN**

President Donald Trump and his son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, met with contractors at the White House to discuss building the border wall late last week, two sources with knowledge of the meeting told CNN. Despite CNN reporting that several senior Senate Republicans and members of GOP leadership have raised serious concerns about the possibility of Trump bypassing Congress and using an emergency declaration to build his wall, the President's meeting with contractors shows that he is seriously considering doing so.

---

## **Senate**

### [Republicans suggest Trump won't get all the wall money he wants - but they are unclear about what he wants](#)

**Erica Werner and Robert Costa, The Washington Post**

Senate Republicans charged with solving the impasse over President Trump's U.S.-Mexico border wall indicated Tuesday they were prepared to agree to less money for the wall than Trump wants. But Republicans said they still do not know what the president will be able to support in the end - lending an air of uncertainty to their bipartisan talks less than two weeks before another government shutdown deadline.

### [Senate Rebukes Trump on Syria Policy Hours Before State of the](#)



## Union

### **Daniel Flatley, Bloomberg**

The Republican-controlled Senate voted to require President Donald Trump to impose new sanctions on Syria, in a rebuke delivered just hours before the president is expected to defend his policies during his State of the Union address. The 77-23 vote Tuesday, a rare break with the president, was prompted by Senate Republicans' strong disapproval of Trump's announcement in December that he was declaring victory against Islamic State in Syria and withdrawing U.S. forces from the country.

---

## **House**

### House Democrats getting down to the grunt work of governing

#### **Lisa Mascaro, The Associated Press**

A House committee will hold its first hearing on gun violence in years. Two others will gavel in to address climate change.

### U.S. Rep. Hank Johnson writes immigration judge on behalf of 21 Savage

#### **Jennifer Brett, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution**

U.S. Rep. Hank Johnson has written a letter to whichever immigration judge rules in the case of 21 Savage, the rapper arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Johnson, a Democrat who represents Georgia's 4th District, has gotten to know 21 Savage through his charitable work and attended his back-to-school giveaway in August.

---

## **2020**

### Elizabeth Warren apologizes for calling herself Native American

#### **Annie Linskey and Amy Gardner, The Washington Post**

Sen. Elizabeth Warren said Tuesday that she was sorry that she identified herself as a Native American for almost two decades, reflecting her ongoing struggle to quiet a controversy that continues to haunt her as she prepares to formally announce a presidential bid. Her comments more fully explain the regret she expressed last week to the chief of the Cherokee Nation, the first time she's said she was sorry for claiming American Indian heritage.

## **Beto O'Rourke Says He'll Decide on White House Bid Before March** **John McCormick, Bloomberg**

Beto O'Rourke, the former U.S. House member from Texas who gained a national following during his unsuccessful bid for the Senate, told Oprah Winfrey in an interview Tuesday that he plans to decide on whether to run for the Democratic presidential nomination by the end of February. "The serious answer is really soon," he said.

## **Jaime Harrison pitches SC Democrats on possible US Senate run against Graham**

**Emma Dumain et al., McClatchy DC**

An announcement could be imminent that a prominent S.C. Democrat plans to challenge Republican U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham in 2020. Jaime Harrison - a former S.C. Democratic Party chairman who now has a leadership position with the Democratic National Committee - met with Democrats in the S.C. House and state Senate Tuesday.

## **Pompeo talks trade - not 2020 Senate run - at Missouri-Kansas Forum breakfast**

**Lindsey Wise and Bryan Lowry, The Kansas City Star**

If attendees of the Missouri-Kansas Forum breakfast in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday were looking for any hints that guest of honor Mike Pompeo might still consider a Senate run in 2020, they came up empty. The event's format allowed members of the audience to ask the Secretary of State questions, but no one asked him about the Kansas Senate race, and Pompeo did not bring it up, multiple sources told The Kansas City Star.

---

## **States**

## **'This isn't me': Gov. Northam's defiance caught advisers off guard** **Gregory S. Schneider and Laura Vozzella, The Washington Post**

Most of his staff was gone for the night as Gov. Ralph Northam (D) and his wife, Pam, worked the phones in the Executive Mansion. They called friends back in Norfolk, old classmates from his medical school, looking for answers about the racist photo that had emerged from his 1984 yearbook.

## **Former delegate to challenge Gov. Justice in primary bid**



### **Jake Zuckerman, Charleston Gazette-Mail**

A conservative former lawmaker announced plans Tuesday to challenge the incumbent West Virginia governor in the 2020 primary. Ex-delegate Mike Folk, a Berkeley County Republican, stood in front of the House of Delegates chambers to issue his challenge against Democrat-turned-Republican Gov. Jim Justice.

### **Trump administration just threatened Jersey's \$350M online gambling industry. The state is fighting back.**

**Jonathan D. Salant, NJ.com**

Online gambling in New Jersey has grown to become a \$350 million business since the federal government gave its OK eight years ago. But President Donald Trump's Justice Department last month reversed that ruling, and state officials fear that a decision could threaten a growing piece of the gambling pie.

### **Inside Wisconsin's Disastrous \$4.5 Billion Deal With Foxconn** **Austin Carr, Bloomberg**

"This is the Eighth Wonder of the World." So declared President Donald Trump onstage last June at a press event at Foxconn's new factory in Mount Pleasant, Wis. He was there to herald the potential of the Taiwanese manufacturing giant's expansion into cheesehead country.

---

## **Advocacy**

### **Pharma Industry Pushes Back Against Required Listing of Drug Prices in TV Ads**

**Stephanie Armour, The Wall Street Journal**

The pharmaceutical industry is signaling resistance to a Trump administration plan to require that the list price be included for most drugs in television ads, setting the stage for a protracted fight over a proposal with broad bipartisan support. The standoff escalated Monday when the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America-the pharmaceutical industry's main trade group, or PhRMA-announced that major drugmakers would voluntarily include price-related information in television ads by directing consumers to websites where they can find information on list prices and costs.

## [A Leaked Memo Says Chinese State TV Registered As A Foreign Agent "In The Spirit Of Cooperation"](#)

**Mark Di Stefano and Rosalind Adams, BuzzFeed News**

The US arm of China's English-language state TV broadcaster has registered as a foreign agent under the Foreign Agent Registration Act. In an internal staff memo leaked to BuzzFeed News on Tuesday, Jing Ma, the director-general of CGTN [China Global Television Network] America, told journalists the network had filed "in the spirit of co-operation."

---

## **Opinions, Editorials and Perspectives**

### [The Truth About B.D.S. and the Lies About My Bill](#)

**Marco Rubio, The New York Times**

A bipartisan supermajority in the Senate is poised to pass the Combating B.D.S. Act today. Yet a few of my colleagues - some on the Senate floor and one in an Iowa airport - recently echoed false claims made by anti-Israel activists and others that the bill violates Americans' First Amendment rights.

### [Federal contractors aren't getting back pay. Our bill could change that.](#)

**Sen. Tina Smith and Rep. Ayanna Pressley, The Washington Post**

At a recent meeting held in the basement of the Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, men and women crowded around a table to address lawmakers. They were custodians, maintenance workers, security guards.

### [Yes, Virginia, This is Chaos](#)

**Larry J. Sabato and Kyle Kondik, Sabato's Crystal Ball**

Saying that anything in the annals of American political history is "unique" or "unprecedented" is dangerous, for the simple fact that the past is filled with so many oddities from which we can draw parallels. That said, we're struggling to come up with something equivalent to what we've seen in Virginia over the past week.

---

## **Research Reports and Polling**

[Explore unauthorized immigration by state using our new](#)



[interactive](#)

**D'Vera Cohn and Jeffrey S. Passel, Pew Research Center**

Unauthorized immigrants make up a quarter of all U.S. foreign-born residents, but the share varies considerably among states. In 2016, they accounted for about a third of all immigrants in some states but fewer than one-in-ten in others, according to Pew Research Center's recently released estimates.



This email was sent by: Moming Consult  
729 15th St. NW Washington, DC, 20005, US

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

SUBSCRIBE

**From:** PAC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**To:** RSMSC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . AMZ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , JLQ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
 >, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) "Kelly, Stephen D. (OGC) (FBI)" (b) (7)(E) per FBI>, JSR  
 (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) LRA (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ADG (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Cc:** CWK (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Date:** Wed, 06 Jun 2018 13:00:17 -0400

**Amid intense scrutiny** of contacts between Donald Trump's inner circle and representatives of Vladimir Putin, Ivanka Trump's name has barely come up. But during the campaign, she connected her father's personal lawyer with a Russian athlete who offered to introduce Donald Trump to Putin to facilitate a 100-story Trump tower in Moscow, according to emails reviewed by BuzzFeed News and four sources with knowledge of the matter.

There is no evidence that Ivanka Trump's contact with the athlete — the former Olympic weightlifter Dmitry Klokov — was illegal or that it had anything to do with the election. Nor is it clear that Klokov could even have introduced Trump to the Russian president. But congressional investigators have reviewed emails and questioned witnesses about the interaction, according to two of the sources, and so has special counsel Robert Mueller's team, according to the other two.

The contacts reveal that even as her father was campaigning to become president of the United States, Ivanka Trump connected Michael Cohen with a Russian who offered to arrange a meeting with one of America's adversaries — in order to help close a business deal that could have made the Trump family millions.

These interactions also shed new light on Cohen, the president's former personal lawyer and fixer, who is under criminal investigation and who played a key role in many of Donald Trump's biggest deals — including the audacious effort to build Europe's tallest tower in the Russian capital.

In the fall of 2015, that effort was well underway. Cohen negotiated with Felix Sater, one of the president's longtime business associates, and agreed upon a Russian developer to build the tower. Donald Trump personally signed a nonbinding letter of intent on Oct. 28, 2015, the day of the third Republican debate, to allow a Russian developer to brand the tower with Trump's name. The agreement stated that the Trump Organization would have the option to brand the hotel's spa and fitness facilities as "The Spa by Ivanka Trump" and that Ivanka Trump would be granted "sole and absolute discretion" to have the final say on "all interior design elements of the spa or fitness facilities."

Ivanka Trump was then an executive vice president of development and acquisitions at the Trump Organization. Publicly, she was a sophisticated ambassador for the company, attending ribbon cuttings, posting pictures of deals on her Instagram page, and gracing advertisements for the company's new properties. But inside the Trump Organization, she had a reputation as a shrewd and tough executive known to get her way.

Ivanka Trump, who now works in her father's administration, did not respond to questions sent to her personal email, chief of staff, and the White House. A spokesperson for her attorney wrote that Ivanka Trump did not know about the Trump Moscow project "until after a nonbinding letter of intent had been signed, never talked to anyone outside the Organization about the proposal, and, even internally, was only minimally involved. Her only role was limited to reminding Mr. Cohen that, should an actual deal come to fruition (which it did not) the project, like any other with the Trump name, conform with the highest design and architectural standards."

In November 2015, Ivanka Trump told Cohen to speak with Klovov, according to the four sources. Cohen had at least one phone conversation with the weightlifter, they said. It is not known what the men discussed over the phone, but they exchanged a string of emails that are now being examined by congressional investigators and federal agents probing Russia's election meddling.

19cv1647-4139-135



BuzzFeed News was shown the emails on the condition we not quote from them.

It's unclear how Ivanka Trump came into contact with Klovov. The chiseled giant, who is 35 and lives in Moscow, has 340,000 followers on Instagram, [where](#) he frequently posts pictures and videos of weightlifting and associated products bearing his name.

He won the silver medal in the 2008 Olympic Games and took gold at the 2005 World Championships, but he has no apparent background in real estate development. Nor is he known to be a close associate of Putin or anyone in the Russian president's inner circle, and he does not appear to publicly participate in his country's politics. It's not even clear he could have made good on his offer to arrange a meeting between Putin and Donald Trump.

Klovov initially told BuzzFeed News that he did not "send any emails" to Cohen. "I don't understand why you ask me about this," Klovov said in text messages. "I'm weightlifter, not a political." When told that he had sent at least two emails to Cohen and had had a phone conversation with him at Ivanka Trump's request, Klovov stopped responding.

Cohen referred BuzzFeed News to his attorney, Stephen Ryan, who declined to comment.

FBI and congressional investigators, two of the sources said, are still trying to determine the relationship between Ivanka Trump and the Olympian.

The Senate Intelligence Committee is conducting an investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, and emails between Cohen and Klovov were among the documents that the Trump Organization turned over to the committee, according to two sources. When he was interviewed by the panel in October, Cohen [released a statement](#) disputing allegations of a conspiracy to rig the election in Trump's favor.

North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr, the chair of the Intelligence Committee, declined to comment on Klovov, Ivanka Trump, or any specifics. But he said he could see how Russian athletes, like the country's oligarchs, might be drawn into Russian politics.

"I can't speak specifically to athletes, but you see the oligarchs, and there is a model for them, and they do things on behalf of the country and on behalf of Putin at their own expense — they're not asked, they just assume the responsibility to do it, whether that's a mercenary army in Syria or it's screwing with elections; whether it's the hacking out of the St. Petersburg facility," Burr told BuzzFeed News. "So it's not a stretch to say if Putin allows oligarchs to make money as long as they don't get involved in politics and they do things that are beneficial to Putin — I could see athletes falling into the same category."

A spokesperson for Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, the committee vice chair, declined to comment. The special counsel's office declined to comment as well.

Ivanka Trump wields unusually strong influence over a president known for his unpredictability and impulsiveness. Though her efforts to moderate her father's right-wing tendencies have not always succeeded, such as when he withdrew from the Paris climate accord despite her opposition, she remains uniquely close to him. She has been by his side for years in business and was one of his most trusted and popular surrogates during the presidential campaign. She has an office in the West Wing and a small staff of advisers.

She was with her brother Donald Trump Jr. and Sater when [they visited Moscow in 2006](#) to scout locations for a possible tower there, famously sitting in Putin's office chair during a visit. She was also instrumental in the development of Trump SoHo, a troubled hotel and condominium tower in Manhattan. New York City prosecutors considered criminal fraud charges against Ivanka Trump and her brother Donald Jr. for allegedly misleading prospective buyers at Trump SoHo, ProPublica [reported last October](#).

## Fwd: URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

From: PAC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
To: RSMSC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), JLQ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), AMZ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), JSR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), LRA (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), ADG (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Cc: CWK (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Date: Mon, 04 Feb 2019 12:12:09 -0500

FYI, I plan to decline to comment but wanted to make sure you were aware of the upcoming story.

-Peter

(b) (6)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Azeen Ghorayshi <[azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com](mailto:azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com)>  
Date: February 4, 2019 at 10:37:48 AM EST  
To: SpecialCounselPress <[SpecialCounselPress@usdoj.gov](mailto:SpecialCounselPress@usdoj.gov)>  
Subject: URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

Hi

Mr. Carr,

My

colleagues and I are preparing a story that publishes documents about detailed plans for a potential Trump Tower in Moscow.

Our

reporting is rooted in texts, emails, architectural renderings, and business documents regarding the tower and negotiations — documents that have served as the basis for our reporting on this topic for the last year. For this story, we plan to publish all of the original documents we possess in full.

The

story is also supplemented by public statements made by the Trump Organization and Mr. Trump in the time frame covered.

I

wanted to give you an opportunity to respond to our findings, and hope you will get back to us quickly. We expect to publish the story by end of day today.



We

intend to publish the following:

- On 9/25/15, Michael Cohen, in his capacity as Executive Vice President and Special Counsel for Donald Trump for the Trump Organization, forwards Felix Sater, a senior advisor to Trump, architectural renderings for a proposed Trump Tower in Moscow. Two hours later, Cohen sends the same renderings to Andrey Rozov, a Russian real estate developer at a company called IC Expert.
- On 9/29/15, the financial advisor for the Russian real estate developer forwards a letter to Felix Sater, originally sent to Michael Cohen. The letter expresses the developer's enthusiasm for building the tower in Moscow, and attaches a Powerpoint of the company's previous Russian development projects.
- On 10/5/15, in an email to Sater, Cohen forwards the first version of a business document known as a letter of intent for what at the time was called Trump World Tower Moscow. The attached letter described the proposed development of a 120-story "first class, luxury residential condominium with related amenities."
- On 10/8/15, Sater sends a second version of the letter of intent to Michael Cohen and a lawyer from New York law firm Moses & Singer. The tower was now designated as "mixed use" rather than just condos, and a location was picked: Moscow City, a former industrial area now clustered with several of the tallest skyscrapers in Europe, perched on the Moscow River just three miles from the Kremlin.
- On 10/9/15, Sater and Cohen email: "Meeting with Andrey Molchonov on Wednesday to do Trump Moscow on his site. Best biggest site in Moscow. his stepfather was Gov of St. Petersburg and Putin worked for him."
- On 10/12/15, Sater emails Cohen about VTB Bank, a US-government sanctioned Russian bank that Sater said might be willing to finance the tower development. Sater then says "Now all we need is Putin."
- Three hours later, Cohen forwards Sater an email with the subject line, "the residential Moscow." Attached to the email is a deck about a 950-apartment development project from a Russian real estate firm, Platforma Investment Company.
- On 10/13/15, a second version of the letter of intent gets the developer's signature, and Sater tells Cohen the deal could "help world peace and make a lot of money."
- On 10/21/15, the Trump Organization makes changes to the letter of intent, including by a Trump Organization lawyer, Adam Rosen. In color-coded line edits on the document, Rosen changed the tower's name from the Trump World Tower

Moscow to simply Trump Moscow. The first installment of the up-front fee was bumped up from \$100,000 to \$900,000. And while the terms of the agreement were to be kept confidential by everyone involved, the edit made a tweak that allowed Trump himself to speak about the deal publicly.

- On 10/28/15, a final version of the letter of intent gets the developer's signature, along with Donald Trump's.
- In 11/15, Ivanka Trump receives an unsolicited email from the wife of a [Russian wrestler, Dmitry Klovov](#). She connects the wrestler with Cohen. Klovov tells Cohen he could arrange a meeting between Trump and Putin to expedite the tower deal, saying, "There is no bigger warranty in any project than consent of [the president of Russia]," according to [Mueller's sentencing memo](#) against Cohen
- On 11/2/15, Cohen sends the final, signed letter of intent to all parties.
- The day after the counter-signed letter of intent is circulated, Trump holds a press conference at Trump Tower in New York City. "I think our relationship with Russia will be very good," he says. "We will have a very good relationship I think with Russia. Now, maybe we won't. But I believe we will have a very good relationship with Russia. I believe that I will have a very good relationship with Putin," he says.
- On 11/3/15, Sater emails Cohen saying that he is traveling to the Bahamas with the Russian developer, who had [rented a private island for \\$175,000](#) for the two men and another individual who was linked to some of Putin's oldest friends, the billionaire Rotenberg brothers. Sater tells Cohen to get him the Trump Tower video clip of Trump promising improved relations with Russia to share with Putin: "It will help our cause," he writes.
- On 12/1/15, Sater asks Cohen for copies of his passport so that he can arrange for visas to travel to Russia.
- On 12/2/15, when asked about Sater's history with organized crime and stock fraud, Trump claims, "Felix Sater, boy, I have to even think about it, I'm not that familiar with him." A Trump Organization lawyer, Alan Garten, says their business relationship started in 2010 and lasted only six months.
- On 12/17/15, Cohen emails Sater after receiving a Google Alert about [a](#)



[news story](#) describing Putin's statements praising Trump. Cohen writes: "Now is the time. Call me"

- On 12/19/15, Sater says he is working with a former Russian spy to help them secure visas and connect them to Russian banks for investment. He asks Cohen for Trump's passport, and claims they can use a Russian bank — VTB Bank — as a go-between to finally reach Putin. Reached for comment, VTB spokesperson  
Julia Govorun said that "VTB never held any negotiations on any matter relating to the construction of the Trump Tower."
- 12/21-12/30/15 Cohen and Sater argue over how long it's taking to solidify the deal and secure the necessary financing.
- On 12/31/15, Sater texts Cohen a picture of a letter, this time an invitation from a smaller Russian bank called Genbank. Cohen expresses his extreme displeasure that the deal was taking so long, and that Sater was now sending him "a bullshit letter from a 3rd tier bank."
- On 1/14/16, Cohen emails [Putin's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov](#), asking about the Trump Tower Moscow Project.
- On 1/16/16, Cohen emails Peskov's office again.
- On 1/20/16 Cohen receives an email from [Peskov's assistant](#), asking him to call her back. They speak on the phone for 20 minutes about the Trump Tower Moscow project, and Cohen requests assistance in securing the land and financing the construction of the tower. In this conversation, according to previous reporting by BuzzFeed News, Cohen told the aide the Trump Organization planned to give the tower's [\\$50 million penthouse to Putin](#).
- On 1/21/16, Sater writes to Cohen, "It's about [the President of Russia] they called today."
- On 1/25/16, Sater continues pushing for dates when Trump could break off from the campaign trail to travel to Russia and meet Putin.
- The same day, Cohen receives an invitation to Moscow from Andrey Ryabinskiy, a Russian boxing promoter and real estate developer, to visit various land plots in the city.
-

On 1/26/16, Sater texts Cohen: "Since you gave

DT dates, you can do anytime that's good for you in February or March. Completely your call, either way it's set they are waiting and will walk you into every office you need to make sure you are comfortable for DT trip."

- From January to May 2016, Sater and Cohen temporarily move their discussions about the project to the encrypted messaging app, Dust. (Prior to pleading guilty to lying to Congress, Cohen had testified that their discussions on the project had officially ended in January of 2016.)
- On May 3-4, 2016, Sater and Cohen discuss whether Trump's trip to Russia should happen before or after the Republican National Convention. Cohen responds: "My trip before Cleveland. Trump once he becomes the nominee after the convention"
- May 5-6, 2016, Sater says Cohen will be invited invited to the "Russia's Davos," the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, in hopes of meeting Putin. Sater claims the invite is being handed down by Peskov, Putin's press secretary.
- On 6/9/16, Sater emails Cohen about preparations for the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, and names a date for a possible meeting with Putin.
- On 6/13/16, Sater forwards Cohen the official invitation from the Roscongress Foundation, the group that organizes the Forum. Sater also sends Cohen a visa application.
- On 6/14/16, news of the DNC hack is made public for the first time.
- The same day, a representative from Roscongress sends Sater a support letter to expedite Cohen's visa. Later that morning, he forwards the invite to Cohen.
- Later that day, Cohen and Sater meet in the atrium of Trump Tower in New York. Cohen tells Sater the Trump Tower Moscow deal is off.

If

you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,



Azeen

Ghorayshi

(b) (6)



Azeen Ghorayshi

| **BuzzFeed News**

| Investigative Reporter

o: 646/795-2544

| c: (b) (6)

[@azeen](#)

111 East 18th St., NY, NY 10003



## RE: URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

From: PAC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
To: RSMSC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) >, JLQ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . AMZ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . JSR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , LRA (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , ADG (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Cc: CWK (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Date: Tue, 05 Feb 2019 10:07:23 -0500

Here is the story: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/azeenghorayshi/trump-tower-moscow-the-secret-files-cohen-sater-putin>

From: PAC  
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2019 12 PM  
To: RSMSC (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . ILO (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . AMZ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) > . DWA  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) . JSR (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) > ; LRA (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) > ; ADG (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) > ; MCT  
(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Cc: CWK (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
Subject: Fw NQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

FYI, I plan to decline to comment but wanted to make sure you were aware of the upcoming story.

-Peter  
(b) (6)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Azeen Ghorayshi <[azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com](mailto:azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com)>  
Date: February 4, 2019 at 10:37:48 AM EST  
To: SpecialCounselPress <[SpecialCounselPress@usdoj.gov](mailto:SpecialCounselPress@usdoj.gov)>  
Subject: URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

Hi Mr. Carr,

My colleagues and I are preparing a story that publishes documents about detailed plans for a potential Trump Tower in Moscow.

Our reporting is rooted in texts, emails, architectural renderings, and business documents regarding the tower and negotiations — documents that have served as the basis for our reporting on this topic for the last year. For this story, we plan to publish all of the original documents we possess in full.

The story is also supplemented by public statements made by the Trump Organization and Mr. Trump in the time frame covered.

I wanted to give you an opportunity to respond to our findings, and hope you will get back to us quickly. We expect to publish the story by end of day today.

We intend to publish the following:

- On 9/25/15, Michael Cohen, in his capacity as Executive Vice President and Special Counsel for Donald Trump for the Trump Organization, forwards Felix Sater, a senior advisor to Trump, architectural renderings for a proposed Trump Tower in Moscow. Two hours later,



Cohen sends the same renderings to Andrey Rozov, a Russian real estate developer at a company called IC Expert.

- On 9/29/15, the financial advisor for the Russian real estate developer forwards a letter to Felix Sater, originally sent to Michael Cohen. The letter expresses the developer's enthusiasm for building the tower in Moscow, and attaches a Powerpoint of the company's previous Russian development projects.
- On 10/5/15, in an email to Sater, Cohen forwards the first version of a business document known as a letter of intent for what at the time was called Trump World Tower Moscow. The attached letter described the proposed development of a 120-story "first class, luxury residential condominium with related amenities."
- On 10/8/15, Sater sends a second version of the letter of intent to Michael Cohen and a lawyer from New York law firm Moses & Singer. The tower was now designated as "mixed use" rather than just condos, and a location was picked: Moscow City, a former industrial area now clustered with several of the tallest skyscrapers in Europe, perched on the Moscow River just three miles from the Kremlin.
- On 10/9/15, Sater and Cohen email: "Meeting with Andrey Molchonov on Wednesday to do Trump Moscow on his site. Best biggest site in Moscow. his stepfather was Gov of St. Petersburg and Putin worked for him."
- On 10/12/15, Sater emails Cohen about VTB Bank, a US-government sanctioned Russian bank that Sater said might be willing to finance the tower development. Sater then says "Now all we need is Putin."
- Three hours later, Cohen forwards Sater an email with the subject line, "the residential Moscow." Attached to the email is a deck about a 950-apartment development project from a Russian real estate firm, Platforma Investment Company.
- On 10/13/15, a second version of the letter of intent gets the developer's signature, and Sater tells Cohen the deal could "help world peace and make a lot of money."
- On 10/21/15, the Trump Organization makes changes to the letter of intent, including by a Trump Organization lawyer, Adam Rosen. In color-coded line edits on the document, Rosen changed the tower's name from the Trump World Tower Moscow to simply Trump Moscow. The first installment of the up-front fee was bumped up from \$100,000 to \$900,000. And while the terms of the agreement were to be kept confidential by everyone involved, the edit made a tweak that allowed Trump himself to speak about the deal publicly.
- On 10/28/15, a final version of the letter of intent gets the developer's signature, along with Donald Trump's.
- In 11/15, Ivanka Trump receives an unsolicited email from the wife of a [Russian wrestler, Dmitry Klokov](#). She connects the wrestler with Cohen. Klokov tells Cohen he could arrange a meeting between Trump and Putin to expedite the tower deal, saying, "There is no bigger warranty in any project than consent of [the president of Russia]," according to [Mueller's sentencing memo](#) against Cohen
- On 11/2/15, Cohen sends the final, signed letter of intent to all parties.
- The day after the counter-signed letter of intent is circulated, Trump holds a press conference at Trump Tower in New York City. "I think our relationship with Russia will be very good," he says. "We will have a very good relationship I think with Russia. Now, maybe we won't. But I believe we will have a very good relationship with Russia. I believe that I will have a very good relationship with Putin," he says.
- On 11/3/15, Sater emails Cohen saying that he is traveling to the Bahamas with the Russian developer, who had [rented a private island for \\$175,000](#) for the two men and another individual who was linked to some of Putin's oldest friends, the billionaire Rotenberg brothers. Sater tells Cohen to get him the Trump Tower video clip of Trump promising improved relations with Russia to share with Putin: "It will help our cause," he writes.
- On 12/1/15, Sater asks Cohen for copies of his passport so that he can arrange for visas to travel to Russia.

- On 12/2/15, when asked about Sater's history with organized crime and stock fraud, Trump claims, "Felix Sater, boy, I have to even think about it, I'm not that familiar with him." A Trump Organization lawyer, Alan Garten, says their business relationship started in 2010 and lasted only six months.
- On 12/17/15, Cohen emails Sater after receiving a Google Alert about [a news story](#) describing Putin's statements praising Trump. Cohen writes: "Now is the time. Call me"
- On 12/19/15, Sater says he is working with a former Russian spy to help them secure visas and connect them to Russian banks for investment. He asks Cohen for Trump's passport, and claims they can use a Russian bank — VTB Bank — as a go-between to finally reach Putin. Reached for comment, VTB spokesperson Julia Govorun said that "VTB never held any negotiations on any matter relating to the construction of the Trump Tower."
- 12/21-12/30/15 Cohen and Sater argue over how long it's taking to solidify the deal and secure the necessary financing.
- On 12/31/15, Sater texts Cohen a picture of a letter, this time an invitation from a smaller Russian bank called Genbank. Cohen expresses his extreme displeasure that the deal was taking so long, and that Sater was now sending him "a bullshit letter from a 3rd tier bank."
- On 1/14/16, Cohen emails [Putin's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov](#), asking about the Trump Tower Moscow Project.
- On 1/16/16, Cohen emails Peskov's office again.
- On 1/20/16 Cohen receives an email from [Peskov's assistant](#), asking him to call her back. They speak on the phone for 20 minutes about the Trump Tower Moscow project, and Cohen requests assistance in securing the land and financing the construction of the tower. In this conversation, according to previous reporting by BuzzFeed News, Cohen told the aide the Trump Organization planned to give the tower's [\\$50 million penthouse to Putin](#).
- On 1/21/16, Sater writes to Cohen, "It's about [the President of Russia] they called today."
- On 1/25/16, Sater continues pushing for dates when Trump could break off from the campaign trail to travel to Russia and meet Putin.
- The same day, Cohen receives an invitation to Moscow from Andrey Ryabinskiy, a Russian boxing promoter and real estate developer, to visit various land plots in the city.
- On 1/26/16, Sater texts Cohen: "Since you gave DT dates, you can do anytime that's good for you in February or March. Completely your call, either way it's set they are waiting and will walk you into every office you need to make sure you are comfortable for DT trip."
- From January to May 2016, Sater and Cohen temporarily move their discussions about the project to the encrypted messaging app, Dust. (Prior to pleading guilty to lying to Congress, Cohen had testified that their discussions on the project had officially ended in January of 2016.)
- On May 3-4, 2016, Sater and Cohen discuss whether Trump's trip to Russia should happen before or after the Republican National Convention. Cohen responds: "My trip before Cleveland. Trump once he becomes the nominee after the convention"
- May 5-6, 2016, Sater says Cohen will be invited to the "Russia's Davos," the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, in hopes of meeting Putin. Sater claims the invite is being handed down by Peskov, Putin's press secretary.
- On 6/9/16, Sater emails Cohen about preparations for the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, and names a date for a possible meeting with Putin.
- On 6/13/16, Sater forwards Cohen the official invitation from the Roscongress Foundation, the group that organizes the Forum. Sater also sends Cohen a visa application.
- On 6/14/16, news of the DNC hack is made public for the first time.
- The same day, a representative from Roscongress sends Sater a support letter to expedite Cohen's visa. Later that morning, he forwards the invite to Cohen.



Later that day, Cohen and Sater meet in the atrium of Trump Tower in New York. Cohen tells Sater the Trump Tower Moscow deal is off.

If you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,

hi

(b) (6)

--



Azeen Ghorayshi | **R** **ws** | Investigative Reporter  
o: 646/795-2544 | c: (b) (6) | [@azeen](#)  
111 East 18th St., NY, NY 10003

# Playbook PM: Pelosi's SOTU guests, Trump's pre-speech message and who Elizabeth Warren dined with

**From:** Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman <politicoplaybook@politico.com>  
**To:** specialcounselpress@usdoj.gov  
**Date:** Tue, 05 Feb 2019 12:52:55 -0500

Feb 05, 2019

[View in browser](#)



POLITICO Playbook PM

BY **ANNA PALMER, JAKE SHERMAN, DANIEL LIPPMAN,**  
**GARRETT ROSS** AND **ELI OKUN**

Presented by



**SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI'S SOTU GUESTS** include José Andrés, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, union officials and two active-duty transgender soldiers. [The full list](#)

**SPOTTED: VALERIE JARRETT** having dinner with **SEN. ELIZABETH WARREN (D-MASS.)** on Monday at Olivia in Penn Quarter. ... Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) dining together at Prime Rib on Monday.

**SO MUCH FOR UNITY ... THE PRESIDENT TWEETS** at 10:29 a.m.: "I see Schumer is already criticizing my State of the Union speech, even though he hasn't seen it yet. He's just upset that he didn't win the Senate, after spending a fortune, like he thought he would. Too bad we weren't given more credit for the Senate win by the media!"

**-- FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH ...** Most Senate Democratic insiders didn't think they'd win control of the Senate.

**-- SENATE MINORITY LEADER CHUCK SCHUMER (D-N.Y.)** tweeted at 10:18 a.m.: "President Trump will report tonight on the state of our union. But, the state of the Trump economy is failing America's middle class. The state of the Trump healthcare system is failing American families. The state of the Trump Administration is chaos." [Matthew Choi: "Schumer predicts 'empty' unity talk and policy promises from Trump's address"](#)



**THANKS, BUT NAH ... ADAM CANCRYN and SARAH OWERMOHLE:**

**"Democrats bat away Trump's olive branch on drug pricing":** "President Donald Trump keeps telling Democrats he wants a big bipartisan drug pricing deal. But Democrats don't believe him — and are rolling out a series of bills that would set the framework for talks far to the left, defying Trump to stand in the way. ...

**"Trump is expected to tout his progress on drug pricing** during Tuesday's State of the Union, including a proposal unveiled last week that would make the rebates drugmakers give insurance plans subject to fines under anti-fraud law. House Democrats quickly panned it, in what some interpreted as a sign they're digging in on dictating the terms of the debate." [POLITICO](#)

**PREVIEWING SOTU ... NANCY COOK: "Trump offers private SOTU preview to close allies":** "The gathering was called so acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney could detail the main themes of Tuesday's speech to roughly 20 Republicans close to the administration, including former campaign officials like Corey Lewandowski and David Bossie. At the session, Mulvaney outlined the speech's main themes while reminding attendees the draft was still in flux and could change in the hours leading up to the speech.

**"A hand-out from the meeting obtained by POLITICO** said the speech will focus on 'choosing greatness' and will zero in on the themes of immigration, American workers, healthcare, the rising cost of prescription drugs and national security." [POLITICO](#)

**-- CNN'S KAITLAN COLLINS (@kaitlancollins):** "A little news -- President Trump is not currently expected to announce the location/date of his second summit with Kim Jong Un during the State of the Union, I'm told. It wasn't in the latest version of the speech he practiced yesterday, but that is fluid and could change."

**-- ELIANA JOHNSON (@elianajohnson):** "Trump will spend three hours this afternoon preparing for his speech with Stephen Miller, according to his private schedule, after taking pictures with @FLOTUS' SOTU guests."

**-- MICHAEL CALDERONE: ["Trump having lunch with news anchors before State of the Union"](#)**

**BLOOMBERG'S JENNIFER EPSTEIN (@jeneps):** "Kamala Harris will do a SOTU pre-buttal on Facebook Live tonight at 7:45 to 'push back on the president's expected message of division, highlight the importance of speaking truth, and outline

her vision for a country that works for all its people.' & [Sen. Bernie] Sanders has response planned."

**ABOUT THE WALL ... CNN'S KAITLAN COLLINS: "Trump, Kushner met with contractors to discuss building border wall":** "President Donald Trump and his son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, met with contractors at the White House to discuss building the border wall late last week, two sources with knowledge of the meeting told CNN.

**"Despite CNN reporting that several senior Senate Republicans** and members of GOP leadership have raised serious concerns about the possibility of Trump bypassing Congress and using an emergency declaration to build his wall, the President's meeting with contractors shows that he is seriously considering doing so." [CNN](#)

A message from U.S. Chamber of Commerce:

Today the U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosted their Infrastructure Summit and urged the President to make infrastructure modernization a priority in his State of the Union address tonight. Now is the time for Congress and the President to act. [Learn more.](#)

**Good Tuesday afternoon.** Happy Lunar New Year (it's the year of the pig).

**WHAT ELSE IS ON THE PRESIDENT'S MIND -- @realDonaldTrump** at 9:10 a.m.:

"Tremendous numbers of people are coming up through Mexico in the hopes of flooding our Southern Border. We have sent additional military. We will build a Human Wall if necessary. If we had a real Wall, this would be a non-event!"

**THE LATEST IN VIRGINIA ... NPR'S SARAH MCCAMMON (@sarahmccammon):**

"NEWS: A California woman accusing Virginia Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax of sexual assault has hired Christine Blasey Ford's legal team -- Katz, Marshall and Banks -- and is consulting with them about next steps, according to a source close to the legal team."

**-- NYT'S JONATHAN MARTIN (@jmartNYT):** "TUESDAY AM NEWS: as part of his investigation into the yearbook, @RalphNortham is planning to hire a private eye."

**A.G. UPDATE -- "Nadler prepares subpoena for Whitaker if he backs out of testimony,"** by Andrew Desiderio: "House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerry Nadler is preparing to issue a subpoena to compel acting Attorney General Matthew

Whitaker's testimony before his panel, signaling he might be anticipating a no-show for Friday's public hearing. ...

**"The committee will debate a resolution to approve a subpoena** later this week, Nadler said. It's the closest a Democratic committee chairman has come to issuing a subpoena since the party swept back into the majority in the lower chamber last month." [POLITICO](#)

**MARIANNE LEVINE: "Trump's pick to replace Kavanaugh grilled for writings on sexual assault":** "Neomi Rao, currently head of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, which reviews executive branch regulations, testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that she would approach recusal from legal challenges to the Trump administration on a 'case by case' basis. ...

**"The aftermath of Kavanaugh's controversial Supreme Court nomination** hearings last year was evident in Rao's hearing Tuesday, with several references to controversial statements Kavanaugh made in his high school yearbook." [POLITICO](#)

**THE INTERCEPT'S RYAN GRIM: ["Top Nancy Pelosi Aide Privately Tells Insurance Executives Not to Worry About Democrats Pushing 'Medicare for All'"](#)**

**ABC'S BEN SIEGEL: "Trump's early trips to Mar-a-Lago cost nearly \$14 million: Watchdog report":** "President Donald Trump's four trips to his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida over four weeks in March and February 2017, including his summit with the Japanese prime minister, cost the government nearly \$14 million, according to the results of a nonpartisan government watchdog's investigation obtained by ABC News.

**"The accounting provides one of the clearest pictures to date** of the costs incurred by the government for the president's travel to his properties. The report, from the Government Accountability Office, a nonpartisan watchdog that works as an investigative arm of Congress, also found that the U.S. Secret Service spent \$396,000 protecting the president's sons, Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump, on three international trips in early 2017." [ABC](#)

**THE INVESTIGATIONS ... ANDREW DESIDERIO and MARIANNE LEVINE: ["Dems revive push to shield Mueller from firing and make his final report public"](#)**



**-- BUZZFEED'S AZEEN GHORAYSHI, JASON LEOPOLD, ANTHONY CORMIER and EMMA LOOP: "Secret Files Show How Trump Moscow Talks Unfolded While Trump Heaped Praise On Putin":** "BuzzFeed News is today publishing a cache of internal Trump Organization documents that lay bare the secret negotiations that continued long after [Michael] Cohen claimed the deal had been abandoned. The documents, many of which have been exclusively obtained by BuzzFeed News, reveal that — despite Trump's claim that the development was never more than a passing notion — the effort to get the tower built was long-running, detail-oriented and directly entwined with the ups and downs of his campaign." [BuzzFeed](#)

**2020 WATCH -- WAPO'S MICHAEL SCHERER: "Howard Schultz plans Thursday policy speech as he moves toward presidential run":** "Undaunted by Democratic attacks, former Starbucks chief executive Howard Schultz plans to deliver a major policy address at Purdue University on Thursday to further explain his vision for an independent presidential campaign that would take aim at the country's two-party political system.

**"The speech comes after a week-long media blitz** that prompted sharp verbal sparring between Schultz and Democratic leaders, who worry that a self-funded bid by a billionaire fiscal moderate and social liberal will ultimately help President Trump win reelection." [WaPo](#)

**-- CHRIS CADELAGO: "[Kamala Harris to focus on early states this month](#)"**

**TRADE WARS -- HANS VON DER BURCHARD and ADAM BEHSUDI: "The great trans-Atlantic trade charade":** "The trade talks between the United States and the European Union seem to be doomed before they even start. Both parties have released their goals for a free trade deal, but both have put forth targets that the other side considers unacceptable.

**"Although talks are still widely expected to take place,** the intractable demands are casting doubt on hopes of real progress. The U.S. has already announced that it wants to win greater access to EU agricultural markets. But the Europeans want to leave food out of the talks out of fear of a massive popular backlash, especially among farmers who wield enormous political clout." [POLITICO](#)

**ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA -- WSJ'S TIMOTHY MARTIN and ANDREW JEONG in Seoul: "U.S., South Korea Break Impasse Over Military Alliance's Costs":** "The U.S. and South Korea struck an agreement in principle over the costs

of their military alliance, ending a monthslong dispute that had loomed over President Trump's planned second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

**"The two sides have agreed to a preliminary deal** covering roughly 28,500 U.S. military personnel in South Korea, though the final details are being sorted out, a U.S. State Department spokeswoman said. The previous agreement expired Dec. 31, though the two sides had until to April 15 to come to new terms. ... Under the agreement, Seoul is set to pay roughly \$1 billion, according to South Korea's semiofficial Yonhap News, representing a roughly 20% increase from previous payments." [WSJ](#)

ALEX GUILLÉN: ["Pruitt legal fundraising started months before his exit"](#)

**CLIMATE FILES -- "Climate Change Could Leave Thousands of Lakes Ice-Free,"** by NYT's Nadja Popovich: "In a study published last week in the journal Nature Climate Change, scientists for the first time quantified the effects of rising temperatures on ice cover across 1.4 million lakes in the Northern Hemisphere.

**"They found that, from Wisconsin to Japan, thousands of lakes** that used to freeze reliably every winter already see some years without ice, and that 'an extensive loss of lake ice will occur within the next generation.' The vanishing ice will affect cold-water ecosystems and be felt by millions of people who live near northern lakes, the study said." [NYT](#)

**KNOWING LISA MURKOWSKI -- BURGESS EVERETT: "'The most independent': Murkowski carves own path in Trump era":** "The Alaska Republican's vote against [Brett] Kavanaugh — the only GOP dissent — cemented her status as the most unpredictable Republican senator and sparked one of her most high-profile splits with [Maine Sen. Susan] Collins, with whom she has long shared the Senate's middle lane.

**"But it was the exclamation point on Murkowski's work** to build a remarkable political brand distinct from others in her caucus that's only been magnified by the presidency of Donald Trump. The two share few character traits — where Trump is impulsive, Murkowski deliberates. And she has been among Trump's toughest GOP critics for shutting down the government to get border wall funding." [POLITICO](#)

**N.Y. MAG'S OLIVIA NUZZI: ["Former White House Staffer Cliff Sims on Trump's Emotional Life and the Fine Points of Leaking"](#)**

**SPOTTED** at a fundraiser Monday night for Kentucky attorney general candidate Daniel Cameron at BGR Group: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Indiana AG Curtis Hill, Pam Bondi, Kristin Strobel, Samantha Dravis, Loren Monroe, Adam Piper, Brian McGuire and Ashley Montenegro.

**TRANSITIONS -- Renee Ellmers** is leaving HHS, where she was a regional director in Atlanta. She previously was a North Carolina GOP congresswoman. (h/t POLITICO Pulse).

**ENGAGED -- Katie Grant**, communications director and senior adviser for House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), on Saturday got engaged to **Justin Drew**, a professional classical musician. Pool report: "The couple celebrated Saturday evening on the Hill with a wine tasting class at DCanter and dinner at Lavagna." [Pic](#)

---

A message from U.S. Chamber of Commerce:



[Advertisement Image](#)

Our nation's infrastructure is crumbling and will only get worse. [Learn how we can rebuild.](#)

---

#### Follow us on Twitter



Anna Palmer [@apalmerdc](#)  
Jake Sherman [@JakeSherman](#)  
Daniel Lippman [@dlippman](#)  
Eli Okun [@eliokun](#)  
Garrett Ross [@garrett\\_ross](#)

---

#### Subscribe to the POLITICO Playbook family

Playbook | Playbook PM | California Playbook | Florida Playbook | Illinois Playbook | Massachusetts Playbook | New Jersey Playbook | New York Playbook | Brussels Playbook | London Playbook

**View all our politics and policy newsletters**

#### FOLLOW US





To change your alert settings, please go to <https://secure.politico.com/settings>



This email was sent to specialcounselpress@usdoj.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000  
Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

Please click [here](#) and follow the steps to unsubscribe.

# Playbook Power Briefing, presented by PhRMA: Ryan tilts away from Trump

---

**From:** Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman <politicoplaybook@politico.com>  
**To:** specialcounselpress@usdoj.gov  
**Date:** Wed, 06 Jun 2018 13:13:15 -0400

---

[View online version](#) | Add [politicoplaybook@politico.com](mailto:politicoplaybook@politico.com) to your address book.



PlaybookPowerBriefBannersmall.jpg

Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by PhRMA

---

By JAKE SHERMAN ([sherman@politico.com](mailto:sherman@politico.com); [@JakeSherman](https://twitter.com/JakeSherman)), ANNA PALMER ([anna@politico.com](mailto:anna@politico.com); [@apalmerdc](https://twitter.com/apalmerdc)), DANIEL LIPPMAN ([daniel@politico.com](mailto:daniel@politico.com); [@dlippman](https://twitter.com/dlippman)) and ZACH MONTELLARO ([zmontellaro@politico.com](mailto:zmontellaro@politico.com); [@ZachMontellaro](https://twitter.com/ZachMontellaro))

---

**SPEAKER PAUL RYAN** on whether the president has the power to pardon himself: "I don't know the technical answer to that question but I think obviously the answer is, he shouldn't because no one is above the law."

-- **KYLE CHENEY:** "Speaker Paul Ryan dealt another blow to President Donald Trump's 'Spygate' theory Wednesday, saying he's seen 'no evidence' to support claims that the FBI spied on Trump's 2016 campaign for political purposes.

**"Ryan, speaking to reporters at the Capitol, endorsed** what he called an 'initial assessment' by Rep. Trey Gowdy (R-S.C.), who said last week that the FBI acted appropriately when it deployed an informant to make contact with Trump campaign associates. Ryan was one of four Republicans, including Gowdy, briefed last month by the Justice Department on the informant.

**"I think Chairman Gowdy's initial assessment is accurate,"** said Ryan, who was one of a handful of lawmakers, including Gowdy, briefed by the Justice Department on the FBI's use of an informant. "I have seen no evidence to the contrary of the initial assessment Chairman Gowdy has made." <https://politi.co/2JBUgvr>

-- **CNN's Jeremy Herb (@jeremyherb):** "Intel Chair Richard Burr also sides with Gowdy over Trump's 'spygate' claims. 'I think that Trey Gowdy's description of the process was correct,' Burr said"

**ELANA SCHOR and BURGESS EVERETT: "Schumer: Democrats could take Senate majority":** "In an interview with POLITICO on Tuesday, the New York Democrat said he sees an upside for his vulnerable incumbents in campaigning as a check against the president. ... [F]ive months before the election, Schumer insisted he's optimistic, touting internal Democratic polls that show even Trump backers in six deep-red states prefer a Democrat who can counter the president.

**"As Trump's going up, our senators are going up in the polling,"** Schumer said, crediting a crop of Democratic incumbents 'who are identified with their own states, as opposed to identified with Washington and the national party.'

**"Thought Democrats have a much better chance** to win the House than the Senate, Schumer didn't rule out a Democratic takeover of his chamber. On top of the strong position of many of his incumbents, he pointed to potential

pickups in a handful of states.

**"When you look race by race,** we have a very good chance,' Schumer said. 'We are much, much closer than people would ever think.'" <https://politi.co/2xRhOrq>

**AXIOS' JONATHAN SWAN: "Trump has commuted Alice Johnson's life sentence":** "Johnson's cause was championed last week at the White House by Kim Kardashian West. ... This is part of a broader effort led by Jared Kushner to highlight the issue of prison reform -- particularly focused on nonviolent offenders." <https://bit.ly/2LtWBWl>

**-- CNN'S KAITLIN COLLINS: "CNN Exclusive: Trump considers dozens of new pardons":** "The White House has assembled the paperwork to pardon dozens of people, two sources with knowledge of the developments tell CNN, signaling that President Donald Trump is poised to exert his constitutional power and intervene, in some instances, where he believes the Justice Department has overstepped." <https://cnn.it/2sKqw4N>

**Good Wednesday afternoon. A HEADLINE THE PRESIDENT WILL LIKE -- "DOJ watchdog finds James Comey defied authority as FBI director, sources say,"** by ABC News' Mike Levine: "One source told ABC News that the draft report explicitly used the word 'insubordinate' to describe Comey's behavior. Another source agreed with that characterization but could not confirm the use of the term.

**"In the draft report,** Inspector General Michael Horowitz also rebuked former Attorney General Loretta Lynch for her handling of the federal investigation into Hillary Clinton's personal email server, the sources said." <https://abcn.ws/2Hp6u5o>

**A HEADLINE THE PRESIDENT WON'T LIKE -- "Ivanka Trump Was In Contact With A Russian Who Offered A Trump-Putin Meeting,"** by BuzzFeed's Anthony Cornier, Jason Leopold and Emma Loop: "[D]uring the campaign, she connected her father's personal lawyer with a Russian athlete who offered to introduce Donald Trump to Putin to facilitate a 100-story Trump tower in Moscow, according to emails reviewed by BuzzFeed News and four sources with knowledge of the matter.

**"There is no evidence** that Ivanka Trump's contact with the athlete -- the former Olympic weightlifter Dmitry Klokov -- was illegal or that it had anything to do with the election. Nor is it clear that Klokov could even have introduced Trump to the Russian president. But congressional investigators have reviewed emails and questioned witnesses about the interaction, according to two of the sources, and so has special counsel Robert Mueller's team, according to the other two." <https://bzfd.it/2JyHBKl>

**PIC DU JOUR -- @JeffFlake:** "@SteveScalise back on the field this morning. This does my heart good." <http://bit.ly/2xQgsxB>

**ON THE PRESIDENT'S MIND -- @realDonaldTrump** at 9:16 a.m.: "Great night for Republicans! Congratulations to John Cox on a really big number in California. He can win. Even Fake News CNN said the Trump impact was really big, much bigger than they ever thought possible. So much for the big Blue Wave, it may be a big Red Wave. Working hard!" ***He also sent out a tweet saying "many more Republican voters" showed up than predicted and congratulated California GOP Rep. Dana Rohrabacher.***

**-- REALITY CHECK** from The Sacramento Bee's Alexei Koseff: Cox "will face an uphill battle in the coming months against [Democratic Lt. Gov. Gavin] Newsom, who has vastly outraised Cox in liberal California." <https://bit.ly/2M0rBhE>

**... at 9:48 a.m.:** "The Fake News Media has been so unfair, and vicious, to my wife and our great First Lady, Melania. During her recovery from surgery they reported everything from near death, to facelift, to left the W.H. (and me) for N.Y. or Virginia, to abuse. All Fake, she is doing really well!" **... at 9:54 a.m.:** "...Four reporters spotted Melania in the White House last week walking merrily along to a meeting. They never reported the sighting because it would hurt the sick narrative that she was living in a different part of the world, was really ill, or whatever. Fake News is really bad!"



**G7 LOOKAHEAD -- "Trump plans confrontational approach with world leaders at economic summit,"** by WaPo's Damian Paletta and Anne Gearan: "President Trump plans to confront other world leaders at a summit in Quebec on Friday over what he believes is a global economic system tilted against the United States, several people briefed on the plan said, escalating tensions with U.S. allies who have expressed outrage at his pivot toward protectionism. ...

**"In a sign Trump is looking to stoke divisions,** White House officials are discussing ways to impose additional economic penalties against Canada — the host nation for the summit — in retaliation for Ottawa's threat to levy tariffs next month on roughly \$13 billion in U.S.-made products. ...

**"White House officials are also considering whether** to have Trump refuse to sign onto a customary joint agreement at the end of the G-7 summit, one senior administration official said, as a signal that the old ways of doing business are over." <https://wapo.st/2JgveCm>

**\*\* A message from PhRMA: New analysis from IHS Markit shows providing access to discounted medicine prices at the pharmacy could save seniors with diabetes more than \$350 annually.** Sharing negotiated rebates could also save Medicare nearly \$1,000 annually for every senior taking diabetes medication, reducing total health care spending by approximately \$20B over the next 10 years. <https://letstalkaboutmedicare.org/> \*\*

**CUE THE INVESTIGATIONS ... "Obama-era license aimed to let Iran convert money in dollars,"** by the AP's Josh Lederman and Matthew Lee: "The Obama administration secretly sought to give Iran access -- albeit briefly -- to the U.S. financial system by sidestepping sanctions kept in place after the 2015 nuclear deal, despite repeatedly telling Congress and the public it had no plans to do so. ...

**"[A] report by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations** revealed that under President Barack Obama, the Treasury Department issued a license in February 2016, never previously disclosed, that would have allowed Iran to convert \$5.7 billion it held at a bank in Oman from Omani rials into euros by exchanging them first into U.S. dollars. If the Omani bank had allowed the exchange without such a license, it would have violated sanctions that bar Iran from transactions that touch the U.S. financial system.

**"The effort was unsuccessful because American banks** -- themselves afraid of running afoul of U.S. sanctions -- declined to participate." <https://bit.ly/2sKsNgB>

**HENSARLING SPEAKS OUT ON TRADE --** "I'm just dumbfounded when I pick up my newspaper to read that the administration is trying to negotiate higher wages for Mexican auto workers so that U.S. consumers have to pay more for cars! I mean, it's just surreal to me," the House Financial Services Committee Chairman Jeb Hensarling told Bloomberg TV's Kevin Cirilli. "... He's going to wipe out economic growth." **Full video** <https://bloom.bg/2HowHkB>

**PYONGYANG UPDATE -- "Trump's North Korea diplomacy crashed by friends and foes alike,"** by Nahal Toosi: "As Trump prepares to meet with Kim Jong Un on June 12, a growing list of foreign leaders is trying to influence the results. ...

**"The global jockeying may greatly complicate** Trump's plans for dealing with Kim, analysts warned. Some nations will want to shape any nuclear agreement, while others could seek to undermine a resulting deal." <https://politi.co/2Jjj4EJ>

**-- JASON SCHWARTZ: "Will Trump stand up for free press in Singapore?"**: "With only a week to go, the White House has yet to nail down what sort of access American reporters will receive, and whether Trump or, more tantalizingly, Kim, will take questions from the media. ...

**"Under normal conditions,** these types of arrangements are made weeks and months in advance, with meticulous planning. But nothing about the North Korea summit has gone according to any normal plan. Complicating matters is

the host country, which is one of the least hospitable to the media." <https://politi.co/2JmW4F5>

-- **38 NORTH'S JOSEPH S. BERMUDEZ JR.:** "North Korea Razing Key Missile Test Stand" <https://bit.ly/2JzW4oC>  
**"38 North" is a North Korea analysis site that uses satellite imagery.**

**HMM...** -- **"Trump to sign veterans health bill as White House works against plan to fund it,"** by WaPo's Erica Werner and Lisa Rein: "The VA Mission Act authorizes new health care programs for veterans, but the bill does not reserve federal money to pay for those programs. A group of powerful Senate committee chairmen aims to remedy that by amending a separate measure to pay for the new \$50 billion law, saying that adding the funds is the best way to ensure the new programs give veterans access to medical care."

**"But the White House has engaged in a quiet effort** to thwart the senators' plan, encouraging lawmakers to vote it down and instead asking Congress to pay for the veterans programs by cutting spending elsewhere." <https://wapo.st/2Hpg8Oo>

**WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE -- "U.S. pushes NATO to ready more forces to deter Russian threat,"** by Reuters' Robin Emmott and Idrees Ali: "U.S. Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis will seek broad agreement for the plan in Brussels on Thursday when alliance defence ministers meet, laying the ground for endorsement by NATO leaders at a summit in July, four U.S. and NATO officials and diplomats told Reuters."

**"Known as 30-30-30-30,** the plan would require NATO to have 30 land battalions, 30 air fighter squadrons and 30 ships ready to deploy within 30 days of being put on alert. ...

**"That lays down a challenge** for European governments, pilloried by U.S. President Donald Trump for slashing military spending after the Cold War, to remedy long-running problems with helicopters and jets that are grounded for lack of parts." <https://reut.rs/2LsvyL4>

**FOGGY BOTTOM UPDATE -- "A Growing List of U.S. Diplomats Acting Undiplomatically,"** by NYT's Gardiner Harris: "There is nothing new about ambassadors making unfortunate remarks. But the growing list of top envoys who have provoked controversy even in posts of close allies, where diplomatic duties largely include party-giving and anodyne cheerleading, has been unusual — and, for the Trump administration, potentially perilous." <https://nyti.ms/2sLU8ia>

**STAT DU JOUR -- "[A]lmost 20 percent of Americans would deny Muslims who are American citizens the right to vote,"** from the Democracy Fund Voter Study Group survey on public perceptions of Muslims in the U.S. **Full results** <https://bit.ly/2sBdlyl>

**AFTERNOON READ -- "Murder with impunity: Where killings go unsolved,"** by WaPo's Wesley Lowery, Kimbriell Kelly, Ted Mellnik and Steven Rich: "The Post has mapped more than 52,000 homicides in major American cities over the past decade and found that across the country, there are areas where murder is common but arrests are rare. ...

**"The overall homicide arrest rate in the 50 cities is 49 percent,** but in these areas of impunity, police make arrests less than 33 percent of the time. Despite a nationwide drop in violence to historic lows, 34 of the 50 cities have a lower homicide arrest rate now than a decade ago.

**"Some cities, such as Baltimore and Chicago, solve so few homicides** that vast areas stretching for miles experience hundreds of homicides with virtually no arrests. In other places, such as Atlanta, police manage to make arrests in a majority of homicides — even those that occur in the city's most violent areas." <https://wapo.st/2M0lry5>

**MEDIAWATCH -- @newyorkerunion:** "We're proud to announce that the editorial staff of @NewYorker has formed a union with @nyguild." **The details from New York magazine** <https://nym.ag/2HoidBf>

-- **Facebook announced** its inaugural lineup of funded news shows within Facebook Watch. The Facebook-exclusive shows will come from ABC News, Univision, CNN, Fox News and more. **Full announcement** <https://bit.ly/2xLx34U>

-- **Four new contributors** are joining CNN as legal analysts: **Renato Mariotti** in Chicago, **Jennifer Rodgers** in New York and **Ross Garber** and **Jack Quinn** in D.C.

**TRANSITIONS -- Coleman Lamb** is now a senior communications adviser for his brother Rep. Conor Lamb's (D-Pa.) campaign in the new 17th district of Pennsylvania. He previously was communications director for Rep. Kathleen Rice (D-N.Y.). ... **Lynn Good** has been elected chairman of the board of the Edison Electric Institute. She is chairman, president and CEO of Duke Energy. **Christopher Crane** and **Ben Fowke** were elected vice chairmen.

-- **OBAMA ALUMNI: Sarah Horowitz** is now account director in the D.C. office of the global communications firm LEWIS. She was previously at RH Strategic and is an Obama Commerce alum.

**OUT AND ABOUT -- SPOTTED** at a bipartisan homeland security reception at the Capital Yacht Club at the Wharf hosted by Ed Cash: DHS Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen who spoke to attendees (**pics** <http://bit.ly/2kS3bKY> ... <https://politi.co/2LtQDVF>), Michael Jackson, Chris Krebs, Dan Kaniewski, Francis Cissna, Chad Wolf, Zach Fuentes, Brendan Shields, Eric Heighberger, Tim Manning, Jonathan and Anne Marie Hoffman, and Chad Sweet.

-- **SPOTTED** at a book party last night at the home of John Jameson for Mike Lux's "How to Democrat in the Age of Trump," published by Strong Arm Press, founded by Ryan Grim, Jess McIntosh and Alex Lawson ( **\$13.49 on Amazon** <https://amzn.to/2sL1CtQ>): Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Reps. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) and Mark Pocan (D-Wis.), Heather Booth, Chuy Garcia, Joel Silberman, Nihal Krishan, Avi Zenilman, Greg Sargent, Chris Harris, Nancy Altman, Laura Bernstein, Lauren Windsor, Anna Lefer Kuhn, David Hogg, Dave Freeman, Aida Chavez, David Halperin, and Soumya Gowda.

**WELCOME TO THE WORLD - Matthew Walther**, national correspondent for The Week, and **Lydia Sherwood**, recently welcomed John Henry Newman Walther, joining two big sisters, Thisbe, and Violet. **Pic** <http://bit.ly/2JlZKaf>

**BONUS BIRTHDAY OF THE DAY: Dr. Matt Heinz**, a Democratic candidate for Arizona's 2nd congressional district and an Obama alum. **A trend he thinks deserves more attention:** "American citizens are treated much differently depending on where they live. The federal response to the 2017 hurricane season is the most recent and dramatic example of this trend. In Houston, authorities have declared the area fully recovered while Puerto Rican residents still face shortages in power and clean water. Most disturbing of all is that the official death toll for Puerto Rico was revised upward from several dozen to several thousand people just a few days ago." **Q&A:** <https://politi.co/2Lr49Jm>

**\*\* A message from PhRMA:** For more than 10 years, Medicare has provided prescription drug coverage for seniors. Competition continues to keep premiums low, but seniors are facing higher out-of-pocket spending. Insurers negotiate significant discounts for medicines in Part D. Giving seniors 80% of those discounts at the pharmacy counter could save a senior with diabetes more than \$350 per year on their health care costs. The change could also save Medicare nearly \$1,000 per year for every senior taking diabetes medication. How? By helping patients afford the drugs they need to stay healthy and stay out of the hospital. **Seniors share the cost. They should share the savings.** <https://letstalkaboutmedicare.org/> \*\*

**SUBSCRIBE** to the Playbook family: **POLITICO Playbook** <http://politi.co/2lQswbh> ... **Playbook Power Briefing** <http://politi.co/2xuOiqh> ... **New York Playbook** <http://politi.co/1ON8bqW> ... **Florida Playbook** <http://politi.co/1OypFe9> ... **New Jersey Playbook** <http://politi.co/1HLKtF> ... **Massachusetts Playbook** <http://politi.co/1Nhtq5v> ... **Illinois Playbook** <http://politi.co/1N7u5sb> ... **California Playbook** <http://politi.co/2bLvcPI> ... **London Playbook** <http://politi.co/2xfDPuK> ... **Brussels Playbook** <http://politi.co/1FZeLcw> ... **All our political and policy tipsheets** <http://politi.co/1M75UbX>

[View online](#)



To change your alert settings, please go to <https://secure.politico.com/settings>

---



---

This email was sent to specialcounselpress@usdoj.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

Please click [here](#) and follow the steps to unsubscribe.

---

# Re: URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

**From:** SpecialCounselPress <specialcounselpress@jmd.usdoj.gov>  
**To:** Azeen Ghorayshi <azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com>  
**Date:** Mon, 04 Feb 2019 12:26:11 -0500

Thank you, Azeen. We'll decline to comment.

On Feb 4, 2019, at 11:10 AM, Azeen Ghorayshi <[azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com](mailto:azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com)> wrote:

Hi Mr. Carr--

Just adding one note, which is that we specify that the Trump Moscow project has become a focus for special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into potential collusion between Trump and Russia during the 2016 campaign.

Looking forward to your response.

Thanks,  
Azeen

On Mon, Feb 4, 2019 at 10:37 AM Azeen Ghorayshi <[azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com](mailto:azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com)> wrote:

Hi

Mr. Carr,

My

colleagues and I are preparing a story that publishes documents about detailed plans for a potential Trump Tower in Moscow.

Our

reporting is rooted in texts, emails, architectural renderings, and business documents regarding the tower and negotiations — documents that have served as the basis for our reporting on this topic for the last year. For this story, we plan to publish all of the original documents we possess **in full**.

The

story is also supplemented by public statements made by the Trump Organization and Mr. Trump in the time frame covered.

I

wanted to give you an opportunity to respond to our findings, and hope you will get back to us quickly. We expect to publish the story by end of day today.

We

intend to publish the following:

-

On 9/25/15, Michael Cohen, in his capacity as

Executive Vice President and Special Counsel for Donald Trump for the Trump Organization, forwards Felix Sater, a senior advisor to Trump, architectural renderings for a proposed Trump Tower in Moscow. Two hours later, Cohen sends the same renderings to Andrey Rozov, a Russian real estate developer at a company called IC Expert.

- On 9/29/15, the financial advisor for the Russian real estate developer forwards a letter to Felix Sater, originally sent to Michael Cohen. The letter expresses the developer's enthusiasm for building the tower in Moscow, and attaches a Powerpoint of the company's previous Russian development projects.
- On 10/5/15, in an email to Sater, Cohen forwards the first version of a business document known as a letter of intent for what at the time was called Trump World Tower Moscow. The attached letter described the proposed development of a 120-story "first class, luxury residential condominium with related amenities."
- On 10/8/15, Sater sends a second version of the letter of intent to Michael Cohen and a lawyer from New York law firm Moses & Singer. The tower was now designated as "mixed use" rather than just condos, and a location was picked: Moscow City, a former industrial area now clustered with several of the tallest skyscrapers in Europe, perched on the Moscow River just three miles from the Kremlin.
- On 10/9/15, Sater and Cohen email: "Meeting with Andrey Molchonov on Wednesday to do Trump Moscow on his site. Best biggest site in Moscow. his stepfather was Gov of St. Petersburg and Putin worked for him."
- On 10/12/15, Sater emails Cohen about VTB Bank, a US-government sanctioned Russian bank that Sater said might be willing to finance the tower development. Sater then says "Now all we need is Putin."
- Three hours later, Cohen forwards Sater an email with the subject line, "the residential Moscow." Attached to the email is a deck about a 950-apartment development project from a Russian real estate firm, Platforma Investment Company.
- On 10/13/15, a second version of the letter of intent gets the developer's signature, and Sater tells Cohen the deal could "help world peace and make a lot of money."
- On 10/21/15, the Trump Organization makes changes to the letter of intent, including by a Trump Organization lawyer, Adam Rosen. In color-coded line edits on the document, Rosen changed the tower's name from the Trump World Tower Moscow to simply Trump Moscow. The first installment of the up-front fee was bumped up from \$100,000 to \$900,000. And while the terms of the agreement were to be kept

confidential by everyone involved, the edit made a tweak that allowed Trump himself to speak about the deal publicly.

- On 10/28/15, a final version of the letter of intent gets the developer's signature, along with Donald Trump's.
- In 11/15, Ivanka Trump receives an unsolicited email from the wife of a [Russian wrestler, Dmitry Klovov](#). She connects the wrestler with Cohen. Klovov tells Cohen he could arrange a meeting between Trump and Putin to expedite the tower deal, saying, "There is no bigger warranty in any project than consent of [the president of Russia]," according to [Mueller's sentencing memo](#) against Cohen
- On 11/2/15, Cohen sends the final, signed letter of intent to all parties.
- The day after the counter-signed letter of intent is circulated, Trump holds a press conference at Trump Tower in New York City. "I think our relationship with Russia will be very good," he says. "We will have a very good relationship I think with Russia. Now, maybe we won't. But I believe we will have a very good relationship with Russia. I believe that I will have a very good relationship with Putin," he says.
- On 11/3/15, Sater emails Cohen saying that he is traveling to the Bahamas with the Russian developer, who had [rented a private island for \\$175,000](#) for the two men and another individual who was linked to some of Putin's oldest friends, the billionaire Rotenberg brothers. Sater tells Cohen to get him the Trump Tower video clip of Trump promising improved relations with Russia to share with Putin: "It will help our cause," he writes.
- On 12/1/15, Sater asks Cohen for copies of his passport so that he can arrange for visas to travel to Russia.
- On 12/2/15, when asked about Sater's history with organized crime and stock fraud, Trump claims, "Felix Sater, boy, I have to even think about it, I'm not that familiar with him." A Trump Organization lawyer, Alan Garten, says their business relationship started in 2010 and lasted only six months.
- On 12/17/15, Cohen emails Sater after receiving a Google Alert about [a news story](#) describing Putin's statements praising Trump. Cohen writes: "Now is the time. Call me"



- On 12/19/15, Sater says he is working with a former Russian spy to help them secure visas and connect them to Russian banks for investment. He asks Cohen for Trump's passport, and claims they can use a Russian bank — VTB Bank — as a go-between to finally reach Putin. Reached for comment, VTB spokesperson Julia Govorun said that "VTB never held any negotiations on any matter relating to the construction of the Trump Tower."
- 12/21-12/30/15 Cohen and Sater argue over how long it's taking to solidify the deal and secure the necessary financing.
- On 12/31/15, Sater texts Cohen a picture of a letter, this time an invitation from a smaller Russian bank called Genbank. Cohen expresses his extreme displeasure that the deal was taking so long, and that Sater was now sending him "a bullshit letter from a 3rd tier bank."
- On 1/14/16, Cohen emails [Putin's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov](#), asking about the Trump Tower Moscow Project.
- On 1/16/16, Cohen emails Peskov's office again.
- On 1/20/16 Cohen receives an email from [Peskov's assistant](#), asking him to call her back. They speak on the phone for 20 minutes about the Trump Tower Moscow project, and Cohen requests assistance in securing the land and financing the construction of the tower. In this conversation, according to previous reporting by BuzzFeed News, Cohen told the aide the Trump Organization planned to give the tower's [\\$50 million penthouse to Putin](#).
- On 1/21/16, Sater writes to Cohen, "It's about [the President of Russia] they called today."
- On 1/25/16, Sater continues pushing for dates when Trump could break off from the campaign trail to travel to Russia and meet Putin.
- The same day, Cohen receives an invitation to Moscow from Andrey Ryabinskiy, a Russian boxing promoter and real estate developer, to visit various land plots in the city.
- On 1/26/16, Sater texts Cohen: "Since you gave DT dates, you can do anytime that's good for you in February or March. Completely your call,

either way it's set they are waiting and will walk you into every office you need to make sure you are comfortable for DT trip."

- From January to May 2016, Sater and Cohen temporarily move their discussions about the project to the encrypted messaging app, Dust. (Prior to pleading guilty to lying to Congress, Cohen had testified that their discussions on the project had officially ended in January of 2016.)
- On May 3-4, 2016, Sater and Cohen discuss whether Trump's trip to Russia should happen before or after the Republican National Convention. Cohen responds: "My trip before Cleveland. Trump once he becomes the nominee after the convention"
- May 5-6, 2016, Sater says Cohen will be invited invited to the "Russia's Davos," the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, in hopes of meeting Putin. Sater claims the invite is being handed down by Peskov, Putin's press secretary.
- On 6/9/16, Sater emails Cohen about preparations for the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, and names a date for a possible meeting with Putin.
- On 6/13/16, Sater forwards Cohen the official invitation from the Roscongress Foundation, the group that organizes the Forum. Sater also sends Cohen a visa application.
- On 6/14/16, news of the DNC hack is made public for the first time.
- The same day, a representative from Roscongress sends Sater a support letter to expedite Cohen's visa. Later that morning, he forwards the invite to Cohen.
- Later that day, Cohen and Sater meet in the atrium of Trump Tower in New York. Cohen tells Sater the Trump Tower Moscow deal is off.

If

you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,  
Azeen  
Ghorayshi

(b) (6)



Azeen Ghorayshi

| BuzzFeed News

| Investigative Reporter

o: 646/795-2544

| c: (b) (6)

| [@azeen](#)

111 East 18th St., NY, NY 10003



Azeen Ghorayshi

| BuzzFeed News

| Investigative Reporter

o: 646/795-2544

| c: (b) (6)

| [@azeen](#)

111 East 18th St., NY, NY 10003

<unnamed-2.png>

# RE: URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

---

**From:** SpecialCounselPress <specialcounselpress@jmd.usdoj.gov>  
**To:** Azeen Ghorayshi <azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com>  
**Date:** Tue, 22 Jan 2019 12:13:12 -0500

---

Thanks, Azeen. Appreciate the detailed email. We'll decline to comment for the story.

Best,  
Peter Carr

**From:** Azeen Ghorayshi <azeen.ghorayshi@buzzfeed.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 22, 2019 11:52 AM  
**To:** SpecialCounselPress <SpecialCounselPress@jmd.usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** URGENT MEDIA INQUIRY: Trump Tower Moscow story in BuzzFeed News

Hi Mr. Carr,

I'm an investigative reporter from BuzzFeed News. My colleagues and I are preparing a story about detailed plans for a potential Trump Tower in Moscow.

Our reporting is rooted in texts, emails, architectural renderings, and business documents regarding the tower and negotiations.

I wanted to give you an opportunity to respond to our findings, and hope you will get back to us quickly. We expect to publish the story by 1 p.m. Eastern today.

We intend to publish the following:

- Trump Tower Moscow, conceived as a partnership between Donald Trump's company and a Russian real estate developer, looked likely to yield profits in excess of \$300 million.
- The tower was never built, but it has become a focal point of the investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller into Trump's relationship with Russia in the lead-up to his presidency.
- Prior to the election, Trump vehemently denied having any business interests in Russia. But since BuzzFeed News revealed that negotiations to build the tower continued well into the campaign, the President and his representatives have dismissed the project as little more than a notion of which Trump family members were barely aware.
- But BuzzFeed News reported last Thursday that he in fact received at least 10 updates about the plans, and then directed Cohen to lie to Congress about when those negotiations ended in order to obscure his own involvement. Mueller's office issued a statement Friday disputing elements of that report relating to the ongoing investigation. "BuzzFeed's description of specific statements to the Special Counsel's Office, and characterization of documents and testimony obtained by this office, regarding Michael Cohen's Congressional testimony are not accurate," it said. BuzzFeed News stands by its story and the two law enforcement sources who informed it.
- On Monday, his lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, said "the proposal was in the earliest stage," and he went on to tell the New Yorker that "no plans were ever made. There were no drafts. Nothing in the file."
- By September 2015, a New York architect had completed plans for a bold glass obelisk 100 stories high, to be topped by a gleaming, diamond-shaped shield emblazoned on all sides with the Trump logo.
- "The building design you sent over is very interesting," the Russian real estate developer Andrey Rozov wrote to Michael Cohen in September 2015, "and will be an architectural and



luxury triumph. I believe the tallest building in Europe should be in Moscow, and I am prepared to build it.”

- According to a finalized letter of intent signed by Donald Trump on Oct. 28, 2015, the tower would have “250 first class, luxury residential condominiums.”
- The tower would be located in Moscow City, a former industrial complex outside of the city center perched on the winding Moscow River that has since been converted into an ambitious commercial district clustered with several of the tallest skyscrapers in Europe.
- Its hotel portion would feature “approximately 15 floors” and contain “not fewer than 150 hotel rooms.” The building would feature a luxury spa and fitness center, a commercial component “consistent with the overall luxury level of the Property,” and an office component “consistent with Class A luxury office properties,” as well as a “luxury” parking component.
- As with most of Trump’s other big real estate ventures, the plan was for a local developer — Andrey Rozov, who led a company called IC Expert — to build Trump Tower Moscow. Trump’s team would provide the glittering name and would manage the building’s operations, such as restaurants and bars.
- The Trump team would also have the option to “brand all or any portion of the spa or fitness facilities as ‘The Spa By Ivanka Trump,’ according to the plans. If they exercised that option, Ivanka or one of her representatives would choose all interior design elements for the spa and health club.
- Other Spas by Ivanka Trump offer a clue as to what it would have looked like. At The Trump International Hotel in Washington, DC, the 10,000-square-foot retreat offers “a carefully orchestrated spa experience” designed to produce “a fresh, authentic and purposeful visit.” Guests are invited to enjoy “an immersion lounge, reflective of local culture and craftsmanship,” specialized massage treatments called “curated rituals,” “aspirational quotes,” a Himalayan salt chamber, a waterfall, and hallways, curtains, and floors in her signature color of rose gold.
- Trump’s company would get a \$4 million up-front payment — a quarter when the licensing agreement was executed, another quarter when they settled on a location for the tower, and the other half either a week before the project’s groundbreaking or two years after the licensing agreement’s execution — whichever came first.
- Trump’s company would also get a cut of all the sales at the tower. From the total selling price of each residential condominium unit, his company would get 5% for sales up to \$100 million, 4% for the next bracket up to \$250 million, 3% for anything between that and up to \$500 million, 2% for anything up to \$1 billion, and thereafter, a solid cut of 1%. For commercial and office spaces, they’d get a 3% cut of all the rent. They’d get another 3% of sales on food and beverages, spa and fitness center use, and conferences.
- Trump’s management company would get paid for running operations at Trump Tower Moscow. For the first five years, they’d get 3% of all revenue generated by operating the hotel. After that, they’d receive a flat 4%.
- At the top of the residential tower, enjoying a view without equal in all the continent, was to have been a gleaming penthouse, designed to be the most luxurious residence in a seriously luxurious building.
- The plan was to give away the \$50 million penthouse to Vladimir Putin.
- Felix Sater stated that the goal was to give the penthouse to Putin and charge \$250 million more for the rest of the units. “All the oligarchs would line up to live in the same building as Putin,” he said.
- By the time Donald Trump signed the project’s letter of intent, he was three months into his presidential campaign, creating the unusual circumstance of a candidate running for the highest office in America while conducting private business negotiations with a hostile nation.
- “Let’s make this happen and build a Trump Moscow,” Sater wrote to Cohen, shortly before Trump signed the letter of intent in mid-October of 2015. “And possibly fix relations between the countries by showing everyone that commerce & business are much better and more practical than politics. ... Help world peace and make a lot of money, I would say that’s a great lifetime goal for us to go after.”

If you wish to comment on or clarify any of these points, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. If I do not respond immediately it is because I am on another call, so please leave the best phone number to reach you.

Thanks,

shi

(b) (6)



Azeen Ghorayshi | **R**ws | Investigative Reporter

o: 646/795-2544 | c: (b) (6) | [@azeen](mailto:azeen@azeen.com)

111 East 18th St., NY, NY 10003