

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

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074  
MINORITY (202) 225-5051

<http://oversight.house.gov>

October 4, 2017

Mr. Don Wright  
Acting Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin  
Secretary  
Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Acting Secretary Wright and Secretary Mnuchin:

On September 22, 2017, I wrote a letter to then-Secretary Thomas E. Price to investigate reports that he took dozens of non-commercial flights at taxpayer expense. I requested a wide range of documents by October 10, 2017, including the number of flights, the full costs for each flight, a list of all passengers, and any documents relating to or approving these flights. I also requested a briefing from his staff by October 6, 2017, and I called on Chairman Trey Gowdy to hold hearings on these abuses.<sup>1</sup>

On September 27, 2017, Chairman Gowdy and I followed-up by sending a bipartisan letter requesting a similar set of documents, also by October 10, 2017.<sup>2</sup>

Before he resigned last Friday, Secretary Price apologized for abusing the public trust and pledged to repay all of his travel expenses on these flights—without exception.<sup>3</sup> He stated:

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, to Secretary Thomas E. Price (Sept. 22, 2017) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/170922EECtoPriceHHSrePrivateJetTravel.pdf>); *Cummings Calls on Oversight Committee to Investigate HHS Secretary's Use of Private Jets*, Oversight Committee Democrats Press Release (Sept. 22, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Chairman Trey Gowdy and Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, to Secretary Thomas E. Price (Sept. 27, 2017) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/news/press-releases/gowdy-cummings-investigate-federal-agency-travel>).

<sup>3</sup> *Tom Price Apologizes for Private-Charter Flights, Pledges to Repay Taxpayers Nearly \$52,000*, Washington Post (Sept. 28, 2017) (online at [www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2017/09/28/tom-price-apologizes-for-private-charter-flights/?tid=a\\_inl&utm\\_term=.b6ac9b7c48df](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2017/09/28/tom-price-apologizes-for-private-charter-flights/?tid=a_inl&utm_term=.b6ac9b7c48df)).

Today, I will write a personal check to the U.S. Treasury for the expenses of my travel on private charter planes. The taxpayers won't pay a dime for my seat on those planes. No exceptions.<sup>4</sup>

To verify that Secretary Price made his payment last Friday, please provide by October 6, 2017, a copy of any check or other form of payment former Secretary Price submitted to reimburse his expenses for these flights. If you do not have a copy of this payment, please indicate that you have not received it and provide any explanation you have received from former Secretary Price or his representatives for why his payment has not been made.

In addition, please indicate whether the Department of Health and Human Services will be fully complying, by October 10, 2017, with the document requests sent by me on September 22, and me and Chairman Gowdy on September 27, 2017. A full review of these documents will provide the Committee with the ability to determine whether any reimbursement submitted by former Secretary Price is sufficient to cover the full costs of all of his noncommercial travel.

Please also indicate whether officials from the Department of Health and Human Services will be providing the requested briefing by October 6, 2017.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Todd Phillips of the Democratic Committee staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings  
Ranking Member

cc. The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chairman

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<sup>4</sup> *Statement of HHS Secretary Tom Price, M.D., Regarding Private Charter Airplane Travel*, Department of Health and Human Services (Sept. 28, 2017) (online at [www.hhs.gov/about/news/2017/09/28/hhs-secretary-price-statement-on-private-charter-airplane-travel.html](http://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2017/09/28/hhs-secretary-price-statement-on-private-charter-airplane-travel.html)).