



To: Interested Parties
From: David Brock, Facts First President
Re: Guide to House GOP Investigations for the Republican Presidential Primary Debate
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Ahead of the second Republican Presidential Primary Debate, Facts First is releasing an updated guide to House Republicans' abuse of government oversight to settle partisan scores. This report will provide you with the facts and the truth behind the lies and fevered conspiracy dreams of House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and Congressmen James Comer and Jim Jordan that will be echoed by the other MAGA extremists on stage in Simi Valley, CA.

House Republicans' Impeachment Inquiry Is A Self-Interested, Politically-Motivated, Evidence-Free Stunt Initiated By Speaker McCarthy To Placate MAGA Republicans

Two weeks ago, McCarthy caved to demands from MAGA Republicans looking to collect on his Corrupt Bargain.¹ He announced an impeachment inquiry in a transparent, politically motivated, and self-interested stunt even though House Republicans, led by Oversight Committee Chair James Comer, have presented no evidence of wrongdoing by President Biden.² Even Republican lawmakers have said they have no evidence to justify an impeachment inquiry.³ Just one month ago, McCarthy threatened to open an impeachment inquiry based on claims about imaginary document requests.⁴ Now, McCarthy has refused to put the inquiry to a vote on the House floor (probably because he knows it would fail) despite saying he would and in a complete flip-flop of his position in 2019.⁵ House Republicans have also blatantly used their power to try to protect former President Trump.⁶ It was recently reported that House GOP lawmakers, including Marjorie Taylor Greene and Elise Stefanik, briefed Trump on a strategy to impeach President Biden.⁷ Clearly, McCarthy is more interested in maintaining his own power than actually governing.

House Oversight Committee Chair James Comer's Investigation Is An Embarrassing Spectacle

James Comer started his investigation by lamenting the fact that he could not try to prosecute Beau Biden, President Biden's son who passed away from cancer⁸. Then, Comer allowed Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene to show nude photos of a private citizen during a House committee

¹ The Hill, [8/31/23](#); CNN, [9/6/23](#); New York Times, [9/12/23](#); CNN, [9/12/23](#); ABC News, [9/12/23](#)

² CNN, [9/13/23](#)

³ CNN, [8/28/23](#); Huffington Post, [9/5/23](#); The Hill, [9/12/23](#); Politico, [9/16/23](#)

⁴ The Hill, [8/22/23](#); Politics USA, [8/23/23](#)

⁵ Rolling Stone, [9/12/23](#); Axios, [9/12/23](#); Daily Beast, [9/13/23](#); Politifact, [9/13/23](#)

⁶ MSNBC, [4/6/23](#); NBC News, [9/7/23](#)

⁷ New York Times, [9/13/23](#)

⁸ Daily Beast, [2/28/23](#)

hearing⁹, after which she proceeded to distribute the photos from her official email list potentially violating state and federal laws¹⁰. Later, Greene went on to give Comer “high praise” for his “investigation.”¹¹

In another embarrassing display, Comer claimed his informant was “missing”¹² and that others were in court or in jail¹³. Then, the “lost” informant who Comer insisted was “very credible” was indicted by the Justice Department and accused of being an unregistered foreign agent for China, an international arms trafficker, violating U.S. sanctions on Iran, and lying to investigators¹⁴. This series of events was so embarrassing it prompted House Oversight Committee Democrats to send Comer a letter expressing concerns that Republicans had been “manipulated” by “an apparent con man” and “fugitive from justice.”¹⁵ It’s been eight months and Comer’s credibility is nowhere to be found.

James Comer Admitted His Investigation Is All About Politics and Revenge

Comer and House Republicans also have a habit of saying the quiet part out loud. Like in May, when Comer suggested his probe was responsible for former President Trump being ahead of President Biden in some polls¹⁶, then tried to claim he’d never suggested such a thing¹⁷. Even earlier in April, Comer admitted his investigation was about revenge when he claimed county attorneys in Kentucky and Tennessee called him and asked how they could investigate President Biden as a response to Trump’s indictment in New York¹⁸. Then, NBC News reported on how Comer’s “investigation” is boosting his national profile and that he did not rule out a run for higher office in his interview. In the same interview, Comer even admitted he decided against running for Kentucky Governor again so he could seek glory in a high-profile DC committee assignment.¹⁹ Now, Rep. Matt Gaetz admitted that House Republican impeachment pushes are about providing Comer a stage in the senate to broadcast his conspiracy theories²⁰. They all know its political theater; they told us themselves.

James Comer Has No Evidence For His Allegations Against President Biden – And He Knows It

Time and time again, James Comer has claimed his investigation is about Joe Biden, but with every new, big announcement, Comer has presented no proof of wrongdoing by the president²¹. Comer has even admitted more than once that he has no proof, only innuendo²². Even Senator

⁹ Washington Post, [7/19/23](#)

¹⁰ New Republic, [7/20/23](#)

¹¹ NBC News, [8/31/23](#)

¹² The Hill, [5/16/23](#)

¹³ Daily Beast, [5/14/23](#)

¹⁴ Daily Beast, [7/10/23](#)

¹⁵ The Independent, [7/12/23](#)

¹⁶ Washington Post, [5/22/23](#)

¹⁷ Daily Beast, [5/24/23](#)

¹⁸ MSNBC, [4/6/23](#)

¹⁹ NBC News, [8/31/23](#)

²⁰ Huffington Post, [8/16/23](#)

²¹ New York Times, [5/10/23](#); Huffington Post, [5/11/23](#); Washington Post, Philip Bump, [8/9/23](#); USA Today, [8/9/23](#);

²² Mediaite, [4/18/23](#); Verdict with Ted Cruz, [7/20/23](#); The Independent, [8/2/23](#); Twitter, Ben Siegel, [9/18/23](#)

Ron Johnson admitted there was no “hard proof” in the Republican investigations²³. Comer’s own witnesses have debunked Republican conspiracy theories about President Biden,²⁴ which Comer would know except he didn’t bother to show up to the interview with his much-hyped witness²⁵.

Further, in testimony to Congress, multiple witnesses have disputed allegations made by an IRS whistleblower about the Hunter Biden investigation. Three witnesses from the FBI and IRS told Congress they did not think the Hunter Biden investigation had been politicized. They also disputed an IRS whistleblower’s allegations that, during an October 2022 meeting, Weiss said he was not the deciding person on whether to file charges in the case – all three said they did not remember Weiss saying that. They also said they did not recall Weiss bringing up any discussion of special counsel authority during the meeting.²⁶

What Comer seems most interested in doing is recycling debunked conspiracy theories leftover by former Trump advisor Rudy Giuliani²⁷. This was especially evident when Comer dramatically threatened to hold FBI Director Christopher Wray in contempt of Congress,²⁸ just because he could, over a form that Comer admitted to having already seen that contained unverified tips²⁹. Then, Senator Chuck Grassley admitted the truth: Republicans did not care if the allegations in the form were true or not, they just wanted to publicize them³⁰. The whole embarrassing saga ended with Comer caving on his contempt threat, and then Comer and House Judiciary Chair Jim Jordan had to admit they did not know if recordings described in the form that were advertised by Senator Grassley were legitimate or not³¹. Even notorious conspiracy theorist Senator Ron Johnson threw cold water on the claims.

They have shown no evidence of wrongdoing by President Biden and when confronted with the facts Comer shows his true colors and resorts to personal attacks against a White House staffer³².

James Comer Cherry Picks Information And Then Exaggerates His “Findings” To Cover For The Fact That His Investigation Is A Waste Of Time And Taxpayer Money

All of Comer’s bluster, innuendo, and embarrassing events has earned him three “Pinocchio’s” from the Washington Post fact checker who knocked Comer for making hyperbolic claims about his investigation on social media and conservative TV despite hedging claims in official reports³³. The fact checker reiterated that Comer has not presented evidence of wrongdoing by President Biden. Recently, Comer earned four “Pinocchio’s” for making “nonsensical” and

²³ Daily Beast, [5/10/23](#)

²⁴ NBC News, [8/3/23](#); New York Times, [8/4/23](#); Reuters, [8/14/23](#)

²⁵ Daily Beast, [8/2/23](#); The Independent, [8/3/23](#); Daily Beast, [8/9/23](#)

²⁶ The Independent, [7/19/23](#); Reuters, [8/14/23](#); New York Times, [9/15/23](#); CNN, [9/19/23](#)

²⁷ Talking Points Memo, [6/6/23](#); Huffington Post, [7/11/23](#); Axios, [7/18/23](#)

²⁸ Washington Post, Philip Bump, [6/1/23](#); Daily Caller, [6/1/23](#)

²⁹ FBI Letter to House Oversight Committee Chair James Comer, [5/10/23](#); Axios, [5/3/23](#); Politico, [5/24/23](#); CNN, [6/2/23](#); NBC News, [6/5/23](#); Washington Post, [6/7/23](#)

³⁰ New Republic, [6/1/23](#); Business Insider, [7/20/23](#); Associated Press, [7/22/23](#); The Hill, [7/25/23](#)

³¹ New Republic, [6/13/23](#); CNN, [6/15/23](#); Daily Beast, [6/15/23](#)

³² Washington Free Beacon, [3/3/23](#); Mediaite, [8/10/23](#)

³³ Washington Post, Fact Checker, [8/17/23](#)

misleading claims about a 2016 email from President Biden to his son.³⁴ The fact checker also previously dinged Comer for publishing highly partisan memos that ignore or downplay contrary information. A fact House Oversight Committee Ranking Member Jamie Raskin has frequently pointed out³⁵. Most recently, Raskin accused Comer of being on a “lost-in-the wilderness fishing expedition” that has yielded no evidence of wrongdoing by President Biden and of timing the release of transcripts to distract from former President Trump’s indictments. Comer is clearly not interested in conducting serious government oversight, he just wants to score partisan political points.

2024 GOP Presidential Candidates Will Likely Use The House GOP Investigation To Score Partisan Political Points, But They Should Address Their Own Abuses Of Power Instead

- First, we have newcomer Vivek Ramaswamy, who has never held public office, but is no stranger to scandal. A new profile reported that two of his former employees filed separate lawsuits alleging he asked them to violate securities laws by using unapproved marketing materials and pitching investors on his company’s ETF before they were legally able to. One former employee also alleged that executives at Ramaswamy’s company did nothing to investigate sexual harassment allegations.³⁶ Ramaswamy once worked for a hedge fund firm that made a large investment in a biotech company run by convicted fraudster and “pharma bro” Martin Shkreli. Ramaswamy had previously called Shkreli “brilliant” and questioned why the Justice Department went after him so aggressively³⁷. Ramaswamy also reportedly hired a Wikipedia editor to scrub his page before he announced his presidential campaign³⁸.
- Scandals run deep in Ron DeSantis’ tenure as governor of Florida. From his abuse of government to take advantage of vulnerable migrants³⁹, to changing state law so he can hold on to power while running for president⁴⁰, DeSantis frequently weaponizes government for his own political benefit⁴¹. One thing DeSantis should have to address though is his time as a legal advisor at Guantanamo Bay, during which he reportedly advised an officer that they could force-feed detainees, something that is considered torture by the international community⁴².
- If we’re talking about corruption, we have to mention Chris Christie. His tenure as governor was full of scandals⁴³, so much so that when Mitt Romney’s 2012 presidential campaign vetted him as a potential vice-presidential nominee, they concluded his background was “littered with potential landmines.⁴⁴” Then there was Bridgegate and

³⁴ Washington Post, Fact Checker, [9/6/23](#)

³⁵ Washington Post, [4/6/23](#); Huffington Post, [6/29/23](#); Axios, [7/28/23](#); Huffington Post, [8/16/23](#)

³⁶ Business Insider, [9/15/23](#)

³⁷ Politico, [5/23/23](#)

³⁸ Mediaite, [5/3/23](#)

³⁹ Bloomberg, [9/20/22](#)

⁴⁰ Business Insider, [5/24/23](#)

⁴¹ Washington Post, [8/14/23](#)

⁴² Miami Herald, [3/7/23](#); Washington Post, [3/19/23](#); The Guardian, [4/28/23](#)

⁴³ Politico, [10/27/16](#); NPR, [10/28/16](#); Business Insider, [7/5/17](#); The Week, [6/4/23](#)

⁴⁴ Vox, [5/14/15](#)

Beachgate⁴⁵, questions over his use of Hurricane Sandy relief funds⁴⁶, using a state police helicopter to travel to his son's baseball game⁴⁷. We could go on and on.

- We must move on to Nikki Haley though, who abruptly resigned as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations after an ethics watchdog requested that the State Department investigate her acceptance of seven free private jet flights from three South Carolina businessmen – flights she likely grossly undervalued. Those businessmen had also previously donated about \$40,000 to Haley's gubernatorial campaign⁴⁸.
- Speaking of former governors there is Mike Pence who unapologetically used campaign funds to pay for personal expenses during his 1990 congressional campaign⁴⁹. While governor of Indiana, he refused to help one of his own cities, East Chicago, clean up lead contaminated water⁵⁰, and he failed to quickly address an outbreak of HIV in Indiana⁵¹. Then, he willingly served as the right-hand man to Donald Trump who, as president, sought to weaponize government for personal political gain at every turn⁵².
- Two of the 2024 candidates have also engaged in questionable campaign finance practices. Senator Tim Scott may be exploiting a loophole in campaign finance law to avoid having to be fully transparent about who his campaign vendors are⁵³. Then, North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum literally paid people to donate to his campaign so he would qualify for the first debate⁵⁴.

It's Been Nine Months And James Comer Failed To Put Up, Now It's Time To Shut Up

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Facts First is a bipartisan organization focused on ensuring that our national discourse is grounded in facts and honest debate. Facts First USA will keep the focus on facts in the face of abuse of government oversight being used to settle partisan scores. Learn more at FactsFirstUSA.org

⁴⁵ New York Times, [7/3/17](#)

⁴⁶ CNN, [1/13/14](#); Politico, [1/15/14](#)

⁴⁷ Politico, [1/15/14](#); The Week, [6/4/23](#)

⁴⁸ Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, Press Release, [10/8/18](#); Business Insider, [10/9/18](#); New York Times, [10/9/18](#); Washington Post, [10/10/18](#)

⁴⁹ Washington Post, [7/15/16](#)

⁵⁰ Huffington Post, [2/16/17](#)

⁵¹ Politico, [3/2/20](#)

⁵² Washington Post, [7/10/23](#)

⁵³ New York Times, [7/28/23](#)

⁵⁴ CBS News, [7/19/23](#)