

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2025

The Honorable Paul Atkins
Chairman
Securities and Exchange Commission
100 F St NE
Washington, D.C. 20549

Dear Chairman Atkins:

We write today to ask the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to investigate potential violations of federal securities laws by President Trump and his affiliates. Specifically, we ask the SEC to determine whether President Trump, any members of his cabinet, or other donor, insiders, and Administration officials engaged in insider trading, market manipulation, or other securities laws violations on April 9, 2025, when President Trump announced that it was a “GREAT TIME TO BUY” into the stock market.¹ President Trump’s statement came just hours before he announced a 90-day pause on his recently-announced tariffs, leading to a historic market rally after days of dramatic market declines.²

In recent days, President Trump has announced a series of erratic, reckless tariffs, leading to significant market turmoil. As a direct result of this chaos, the U.S. financial markets have experienced dramatic declines over the course of just a few days.³ Specifically, the U.S. stock market lost trillions of dollars of value in a few short days, with the S&P 500 losing \$5.06 trillion in market value, or 10%, in two days, and the Dow Jones experiencing its biggest back-to-back losses since the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic.⁴

On April 9, 2025, however, the market saw a historic rally after President Trump announced a 90-day pause on most tariffs. The stock market saw “one of [its] best days in history,” with the S&P 500 surging 9.5% (one of its strongest performances in over 80 years), Dow Jones rising 7.9%, and the Nasdaq composite rising 12.2%.⁵

To ensure that market insiders do not unfairly benefit from privileged information that could impact stock prices, our nation has strict laws to prevent insider trading and market manipulation. Yet before pausing the tariffs that threw markets into disarray, President Trump

¹ CNBC, “Trump’s morning ‘buy’ call nets huge returns for those who listened,” Alex Haring, April 9, 2025, <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/04/09/trumps-morning-buy-call-nets-huge-returns-for-those-who-listened.html>.

² *Id.*

³ Reuters, “S&P 500 Loses \$5 trillion in Two Days in Trump Tariff Selloff,” Caroline Valetkevitch, April 4, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/markets/global-markets-wrapup-1-2025-04-04/>; Morningstar, “U.S. Stocks See Biggest 2-Day Wipeout in History as Market Loses \$11 Trillion Since Inauguration Day,” Joseph Adinolfi, April 4, 2025, <https://www.morningstar.com/news/marketwatch/20250404446/us-stocks-see-biggest-2-day-wipeout-in-history-as-market-loses-11-trillion-since-inauguration-day>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Associated Press, “Wall Street’s euphoria sends US stocks to historic gains after Trump pauses most of his tariffs,” Stan Choe, April 9, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/stocks-markets-tariffs-trump-721a3a5971f1b254981d32f4acb9eb17>.

appears to have previewed his plans to do so on Truth Social: at 9:37 am, he announced, “THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO BUY!!! DJT.”⁶ His official announcement of the tariff pause came roughly 4 hours later at 1:18 pm.⁷ It is unclear which officials and affiliates of President Trump had advance knowledge of his plans to delay tariffs—but insiders may have known that he was going to announce a tariff pause and that the market would improve.⁸

It is unconscionable that as American families are concerned about their financial security during this economic crisis entirely manufactured by the President, insiders may have actively profited from the market volatility⁹ and potentially perpetrated financial fraud on the American public. At this critical moment, the SEC must do its part to restore Americans’ faith in the rule of law and to preserve the integrity of the financial system, in accordance with its statutory mission.¹⁰

We call on the SEC to investigate whether any actions taken by the President, his donors, and other insiders, constitute market manipulation, insider trading, or other violations of securities laws. We urge the SEC to investigate whether the tariff announcements, which caused the market crash and subsequent partial recovery, enriched administration insiders and friends at the expense of the American public and whether any insiders, including the President’s family, had prior knowledge of the tariff pause that they abused to make stock trades ahead of the President’s announcement. In addition, we request responses to the following questions by Friday, April 25:

1. What steps have you taken, or are you planning to take, to investigate actions by President Trump, donors, and other potential insiders that may constitute market manipulation, insider trading, or other violations of federal securities laws in connection with President Trump’s tariff actions and announcements?
2. Have you received any communications from President Trump, White House officials, or President Trump's affiliates regarding the investigation described in (1), or other market activity related to the tariff actions and announcements?

⁶ CNBC, “Trump’s morning ‘buy’ call nets huge returns for those who listened,” Alex Haring, April 9, 2025, <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/04/09/trumps-morning-buy-call-nets-huge-returns-for-those-who-listened.html>; Truth Social Post by President Donald J. Trump, @realDonaldTrump, <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114308272725981913>.

⁷ Truth Social Post by President Donald J. Trump, @realDonaldTrump, <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114309144289505174>.

⁸ The New Republican. “Trump Brags About How Tariff Pause Made His Friends Even Richer,” April 10, 2025, <https://newrepublic.com/post/193860/donald-trump-brags-tariff-pause-made-billionaires-richer>.

⁹ See, e.g., Yahoo Finance, Marjorie Taylor Greene Buys the Dip: Congresswoman Purchases Shares of Apple, Amazon, Nike, and More Following Tariff-Related Sell-Off, Adam Eckert, April 9, 2025, <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/marjorie-taylor-greene-buys-dip-203042521.html>.

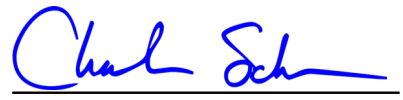
¹⁰ Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act of 1934 [15 U.S.C. § 78j(b)] provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to use or employ, in connection with the purchase or sale of any security registered on a national securities exchange or any security not so registered, any manipulative or deceptive device or contrivance in contravention of such rules and regulations as the Commission may prescribe as necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors. This covers behavior such as “pumping” the price and volume of trading in a stock through false and misleading statements, and “dumping” the stock shortly thereafter for a profit, and misappropriating and trading on the basis of insider information.

3. In recent weeks, the Trump Administration has prioritized staff reductions, cancelled contracts, and reduced enforcement activity at the SEC.
 - a. What impact do recent staff departures, particularly within the Division of Trading and Markets, have on your ability to monitor and respond to large-scale market events, such as the crash following President Trump's tariff actions?
 - b. What impact do recent staff departures have on your ability to investigate and pursue enforcement actions, including for violations of securities laws during the market volatility caused by President Trump's tariff actions?

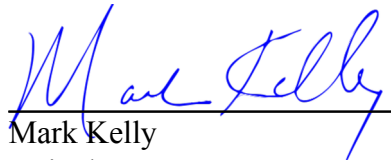
Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



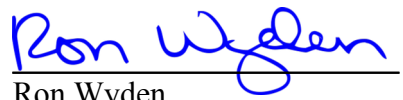
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Finance