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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6075

LAURA SWANSON, STAFF DIRECTOR
BRAD GRANTZ, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

May 27, 2021

Jack Dorsey
Chief Executive Officer
Twitter, Inc.
1355 Market Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Dorsey:

I am seeking Twitter's assistance in recovering the deleted tweets of two of President Biden's nominees for senior positions at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). They are Mark Colón, who has been nominated for HUD Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, and Solomon Greene, who has been nominated for HUD Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research.¹

As the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs (Committee)—the Senate Committee responsible for vetting HUD nominees—I am concerned by tweets, including deleted tweets, made by these nominees. The content of these tweets raise serious concerns about Mr. Colón's and Mr. Greene's policy views, as well as their character, temperament, and fitness for office. My Committee staff have been able to locate some of their deleted tweets through publicly available databases of archived tweets. However, it appears that these databases are incomplete and, therefore, may not include all of the tweets deleted by Mr. Colón and Mr. Greene. Because these recent, formerly public statements by Mr. Colón and Mr. Greene are likely to shed light on how they would carry out their duties at HUD, it is critical that Senators on the Committee quickly receive this deleted information from Twitter to allow us to fully evaluate these nominations to senior leadership positions in the federal government.

Mark Colón

Based on a review of information available online, Mr. Colón appears to have been a prolific tweeter who deleted some of his tweets prior to his yet to be scheduled nomination hearing for HUD Assistant Secretary.² This is apparent upon an examination of both his deleted and undeleted tweets. The publicly available deleted tweets can be found on the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, which has preserved thousands of Mr. Colón's tweets between March 17, 2019 and the present.³ While these archived tweets only represent a partial snapshot of Mr.

¹ See Presidential Nomination of Mark Colón, Congress.gov (received in the Senate on Apr. 28, 2021), <https://www.congress.gov/nomination/117th-congress/489>; Presidential Nomination of Solomon Greene, Congress.gov (received in the Senate on Apr. 27, 2021), <https://www.congress.gov/nomination/117th-congress/433?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22solomon+greene%22%5D%7D&s=1&r=1>.

² See Twitter account of Mark Colón (last accessed May 26, 2021), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32.

³ See archived tweets of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (last accessed May 26, 2021), https://web.archive.org/web/*/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32*.

Colón's tweets since he joined Twitter, they nevertheless paint a picture of a man who, until very recently, utilized his Twitter account while serving as a public housing official in New York to routinely mock and attack others with whom he disagrees, propagate baseless conspiracy theories, and exhibit other divisive and unprofessional behavior.

Mr. Colón has routinely tweeted disparaging comments about U.S. Senators, U.S. House members, Cabinet officials, Republican voters, and news anchors, among others. For instance, he tweeted that he sees Trump voters as “deplorables”⁴ and called Republican Senators who intended to vote to acquit President Trump in his first impeachment trial “traitors.”⁵ He mocked Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) and other Republicans in a tweet referring to them as “clowns,”⁶ referred to Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) as “Senator Snagglepuss”⁷ and “#SenatorShameless,”⁸ and called Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) “Senator Jellyfish.”⁹ In response to a clip of Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) explaining that he wanted to first see all the evidence before voting on President Trump's first impeachment, Mr. Colón tweeted a meme with the words, “Oh denial. The first step in not wanting to admit things.”¹⁰ He tweeted that Senator Mike Braun's (R-IN) comments regarding the first impeachment trial were “just gaslighting the public because you love your job more than you love your country”¹¹ and that “[Representative] Jim Jordan & the concept of ‘intelligence’” is an “Oxymoron.”¹² He tweeted that Senator Rand Paul's (R-KY) spine is “too puny & insignificant to support any sense of dignity.”¹³ In response to a tweet referring to Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) as “MassacreMitch,” Mr. Colón tweeted “#SendInTheClowns #TheyreAlreadyHere.”¹⁴ He mocked the physical appearance of a female Fox News host, Trish Regan, by saying that “[h]er face doesn't move,”¹⁵ and said that “White women sold out the sisterhood and the world by voting for Trump” in 2016.¹⁶

Mr. Colón also tweeted incessantly about President Trump in highly derogatory terms. For example, he tweeted that “Donald Trump is the Devil, only stupider and in human form,”¹⁷ among other insulting and hateful rhetoric.¹⁸ On multiple occasions in now deleted tweets, Mr.

⁴ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 16, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1184636838729977856.

⁵ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Dec. 5, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1202581977674788864.

⁶ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Jan. 21, 2020), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1219807112441757696.

⁷ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 7, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1181411759757955073.

⁸ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Feb. 9, 2020), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1226563086636720137.

⁹ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 14, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1183682590345236480.

¹⁰ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Jan. 28, 2020), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1222337745114345473.

¹¹ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Jan. 23, 2020), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1220535702754070528.

¹² Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 5, 2019),

https://web.archive.org/web/20191105082518if_/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1191630196929126401.

¹³ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 5, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1191641436447551488.

¹⁴ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Aug. 31, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1167941095205961728.

¹⁵ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Mar. 10, 2020), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1237245893692325888.

¹⁶ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 9, 2016), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/796544450885513217.

¹⁷ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 14, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1183926774004105217.

¹⁸ See e.g., tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 20, 2019), (claiming that “#PresidentCriminallyInsane actually gives sociopaths a bad name.”), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1185970402620776448; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 31, 2019), (referring to the President as “#DotardInChief”),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1190102425585274880; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 8, 2019),

(referring to the President as “#PresidentCorruptAsAMFer”),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1181432324409434112; see also generally archived tweets of Mark Colón,

Colón referred to the President of the United States as a “P[***]y A[**] B[***]h.”¹⁹ On other occasions, he referred to the President as “#PresidentDumbA[**]” and claimed he’s only semi-literate.²⁰ He tweeted that President Trump’s son, Eric Trump, is thinking, “I wish dad loved me or, at least, remembered my name”²¹ and referred to the President as “#PresidentDaddyNeverLovedMe”²² and “#PresidentLookWhoLovesMe.”²³ He called the President “#PresidentSharpieA[**]B[***]h,”²⁴ “#PresidentLessThanZero,”²⁵ and “#PublicEnemyNo1.”²⁶ He mocked President Trump for going to the White House’s underground bunker, at the request of the Secret Service, during the violent demonstrations near the White House in May 2020, writing that the President was “hiding out in your fortified bunker, with the Secret [Service] reading you bedtime stories.”²⁷ In response to a tweeted picture of President Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, Attorney General Bill Barr, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo with the caption “Name this band,” Mr. Colón responded with the name “The Wu Tang (Ku Klux) Klan,” a name insinuating that these men are white supremacists.²⁸

Moreover, Mr. Colón routinely used Twitter to propagate destructive conspiracy theories about various politicians, particularly Republicans. For example, he referred to Senator McConnell as “Moscow Mitch,” an apparent allusion to the baseless claim that he was an asset of the Kremlin.²⁹ Likewise, he retweeted a tweet insinuating that seven sitting U.S. Senators and a member of the U.S. House of Representatives—Senators John Kennedy (R-LA), Jerry Moran

Internet Archive Wayback Machine (last accessed May 26, 2021),
https://web.archive.org/web/*/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32*.

¹⁹ This letter has edited Mr. Colón’s tweets to remove vulgarities. *See e.g.*, archived tweet of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Sept. 11, 2019),

https://web.archive.org/web/20190927215445if_/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1171992195622158336;

archived tweet of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Sept. 8, 2019),

https://web.archive.org/web/20190924182805if_/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1170935049224687616;

archived tweet of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Sept. 9, 2019),

https://web.archive.org/web/20190925184640if_/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1171261826908262400.

²⁰ This letter has edited Mr. Colón’s tweets to remove vulgarities. *See e.g.*, tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 24, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1176651430993809409; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 16, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1173628908782137349; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 27, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1177761851922366464; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 29, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1178298931526156289.

²¹ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 3, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1191049574963658752.

²² Archived tweet of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Apr. 8, 2020),

https://web.archive.org/web/20200409011252if_/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1248055932904505345.

²³ This letter has edited Mr. Colón’s tweets to remove vulgarities. Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Apr. 11, 2020),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1249098744420655106.

²⁴ *See e.g.*, tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 23, 2019),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1176343328096444416.

²⁵ *See e.g.*, tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 11, 2019),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1171769881768923137.

²⁶ *See e.g.*, tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 23, 2019),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1176343328096444416; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 16, 2019),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1173575619323604993; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 17, 2019),

https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1173943687014993921.

²⁷ Archived tweet of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Jun. 2, 2020),

https://web.archive.org/web/20200603112217/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1267988872211902464.

²⁸ Archived tweet of Mark Colón, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Oct. 4, 2019),

https://web.archive.org/web/20191004164203if_/https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1180154374913478656.

²⁹ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 4, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1169231050893135872.

(R-KS), John Thune (R-SD), Ron Johnson (R-WI), Richard Shelby (R-AL), Steve Daines (R-MT), and John Hoeven (R-ND), and Representative Kay Granger (R-TX)—were Russian stooges because they took a trip to Russia during the Fourth of July,³⁰ and retweeted yet another post indicating that “John Kennedy was also 1 of the eight sycophants” who went on this Russia trip.³¹ (In reality, these members of Congress were participating in a Congressional delegation to Russia for the purposes of warning Russian President Vladimir Putin not to interfere in the 2018 midterm elections.)³² In yet another Russia-related conspiracy theory, Mr. Colón indicated that he agreed with a Twitter user’s post alleging, without evidence, that President Trump’s decision to withdraw troops from northern Syria in 2019 to avoid a violent conflict between Turkey and the Kurds³³ was instead carried out because “Putin ordered him to do it.”³⁴ Mr. Colon also retweeted a post alleging that Mr. Trump “actually lost” the 2016 election on account of Russia getting him elected,³⁵ and he retweeted a post asserting that President Trump had dementia while running for reelection in 2020,³⁶ among other conspiracy theories steeped in partisan rhetoric and vitriol.³⁷

Solomon Greene

Based on a review of information available online, it also appears that Mr. Greene was a prolific tweeter who deleted some of his tweets prior to his yet to be scheduled nomination hearing for HUD Assistant Secretary.³⁸ Both the Committee and the Senate at large would benefit from having access to these formerly public records reflecting Mr. Greene’s policy views, character, temperament, and fitness for office. This is particularly true because, based on a review of his Twitter account, it is evident that Mr. Greene routinely utilized Twitter to advance his views on housing policy. For example, on July 29, 2020, in an archived tweet that he apparently deleted from his Twitter account, Mr. Green wrote that HUD’s final Affirmatively Further Fair Housing rule was “abruptly issued” and “eviscerated Congress’s intent in adopting the Fair Housing

³⁰ Retweet of @Mama_Liberal by Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 17, 2019), https://twitter.com/Mama_Liberal/status/1196106057942261760/retweets.

³¹ Retweet of @Licky_No by Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 17, 2019), <https://twitter.com/LickyNo/status/1196110619944112129/retweets>.

³² See e.g., May Louise Kelly, *GOP Senators Spend Independence Day in Moscow*, NPR (Jul. 6, 2018), <https://www.npr.org/2018/07/06/626664156/gop-senators-spend-july-4-in-moscow>.

³³ See e.g., Guardian staff and agencies, *Trump orders US troops out of northern Syria as Turkish assault continues* THE GUARDIAN (Oct. 13, 2019), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/13/trump-us-troops-northern-syria-turkish-assault-kurds>.

³⁴ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Oct. 7, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1181395488647585792.

³⁵ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 12, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1172296212734562304.

³⁶ Tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Sept. 14, 2019), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1173126974799327234.

³⁷ See e.g., retweet of @taradublinrocks by Mark Colón, Twitter (Nov. 25, 2019) (retweeting a post calling Senator Graham “#LeningradLindsey” and “a traitorous Trumpocrite”), <https://twitter.com/taradublinrocks/status/1199060410286002176/retweets>; tweet of Mark Colón, Twitter (Dec. 3, 2019) (tweeted “#GymJordanKnew” in response to a tweet alleging that Representative Jordan “witnessed the rapes of young boys and didn’t report any of it” and that he “support[s] treason”), https://twitter.com/mark_colon32/status/1201742011818299392; retweet of @ThePubliusUSA by Mark Colón, Twitter (Feb. 3, 2020) (retweeting a tweet alleging that President Trump “is a Russian money launderer”), <https://twitter.com/ThePubliusUSA/status/1224311065133056000/retweets>.

³⁸ See Twitter account of Solomon Greene (last accessed May 26, 2021), <https://twitter.com/metrosolomon>.

Act.”³⁹ Similarly, on September 4, 2020, in an archived tweet about HUD’s implementation of the Fair Housing Act’s Disparate Impact Standard that is no longer available on his Twitter account, Mr. Greene asserted that “HUD releasing rule gutting disparate impact on a Fri evening before holiday is sneaky & mean. But then you read it & only gets worse!”⁴⁰

Moreover, like Mr. Colón, Mr. Greene has tweeted controversial and troubling comments from his Twitter account, including support for defunding the police. For example, on May 30, 2020, Mr. Greene tweeted “No More Money for the Police” along with a quote saying: “Here’s another idea: Imagine if the money used to pay the salaries of police officers who endlessly patrol public housing buildings and harass residents can be used to fund plans that residents design to keep themselves safe.”⁴¹ He followed up on this tweet by saying that Neighborhood Funders Group and Funders for Justice—two far-Left organizations that have long advocated for defunding the police⁴²—“had it right all along!”⁴³ Both of these anti-police tweets also appear to have been deleted from Mr. Greene’s Twitter account.⁴⁴ On May 31, 2020, in a post that has since been deleted, Mr. Greene tweeted that “Violent protests are not the story. Police violence is” and linked to an article arguing that demonstrations that turn violent and result in the destruction of property, assaults, and even death should not “become[] the dominant story” because the focus instead should be on “systemic racism.”⁴⁵

Similarly, on July 23, 2020, Mr. Greene retweeted a post by former HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan asserting that President Trump’s decision to send federal troops into Portland to defend American citizens’ lives and property “limit[ed] free speech.”⁴⁶ Mr. Greene’s decision to amplify this tweet raises serious questions about his views on violent demonstrations, including whether he considers injuring people and destroying property during the 2020 Portland riots to be “free speech” that should be permitted or supported.

Collectively, Mr. Greene’s and Mr. Colón’s recent tweets, an unknown number of which have since been deleted, raise significant concerns about these nominees’ policy views, character, temperament, and fitness for office. Accordingly, to allow my fellow Senators and me the opportunity to fully evaluate their nominations, I request that you produce to the Committee all

³⁹ Archived tweet of Solomon Greene, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Jul. 29, 2020), <https://web.archive.org/web/20200729232024/https://twitter.com/metrosolomon/status/1288615266637709312>.

⁴⁰ Archived tweet of Solomon Greene, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (Sept. 4, 2020), <https://web.archive.org/web/20200905011152/https://twitter.com/metrosolomon/status/1302051704238755840>.

⁴¹ Archived tweet of Solomon Greene, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (May 30, 2020), https://web.archive.org/web/20200530230218if_/https://twitter.com/metrosolomon/status/1266867002129494018.

⁴² See e.g., Funders for Justice (last accessed May 26, 2021), <https://divest-ffj.org/> and <https://fundersforjustice.org/?s=defund>; and Neighborhood Funders Group (last accessed May 26, 2021), <https://www.nfg.org/news/letter-nfg-community-our-president-nfgs-june-2020-newsletter> and <https://www.nfg.org/search?keys=defund>.

⁴³ Archived tweet of Solomon Greene, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (May 30, 2020), https://web.archive.org/web/20200530230742if_/https://twitter.com/metrosolomon/status/1266868130363723780.

⁴⁴ See Twitter account of Solomon Greene, Twitter (last accessed May 26, 2021), <https://twitter.com/metrosolomon>.

⁴⁵ Archived tweet of Solomon Greene, Internet Archive Wayback Machine (May 31, 2020), https://web.archive.org/web/20200601021137if_/https://twitter.com/metrosolomon/status/1267274379093774336.

⁴⁶ Retweet of @ShaunDonovanNYC by Solomon Greene, Twitter (Jul. 23, 2020), <https://twitter.com/ShawnDonovanNYC/status/1286338039699197952/retweets>.

tweets that have been deleted from Mr. Greene's and Mr. Colón's Twitter accounts by no later than close of business on June 3, 2021.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat Toomey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P".

Pat Toomey
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Sherrod Brown, Chairman, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

The Honorable Marcia Fudge, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development