Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 19, 2026

Secretary Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

We write to express our serious concerns regarding the Department of Commerce's decision to significantly loosen export controls on the United Arab Emirates (UAE) without providing justification or evidence that proliferation or diversion risk had been mitigated. On July 10, 2026,[1] the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) announced that it would "significantly upgrade" the UAE's status under the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) by reclassifying the country from Country Groups D:3 and D:4 to Country Group A:5. This represents one of the most consequential changes to a country's export control status in recent years.

As a point of reference, countries designated under Country Groups D:3 and D:4 are identified by the United States as presenting proliferation concerns and are therefore subject to heightened export restrictions and U.S. arms embargoes. By contrast, Country Group A:5 is reserved for the United States' most trusted export control partners, including participants in the four multilateral export control regimes and countries eligible to receive sensitive U.S. items under License Exception Strategic Trade Authorization (STA). According to the Department's press release, this reclassification will make the UAE government and approved commercial entities eligible for license-free exports, re-exports, and in-country transfers under License Exception STA.

The Department has upgraded the UAE from a proliferation concern to a trusted partner without providing a justification or evidence that the UAE has fully cut off AI and technology cooperation with China. In fact, there remain significant concerns about whether UAE companies such as G42 have adopted sufficient safeguards to prevent diversion to China. Under these circumstances, the reclassification raises serious questions about the Department's review process, the criteria used to support its determination, and whether political influence played a role in the decision.

These concerns are heightened given President Trump and his family's conflicts of interest related to the UAE. In 2024, President Trump's sons, Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump, co-

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[1] https://www.bis.gov/press-release/department-commerce-eases-export-controls-uae

founded the cryptocurrency firm World Liberty Financial. Just days before President Trump's inauguration in January 2025, Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed Al Nahyan, a senior member of the UAE royal family and the country's National Security Advisor, purchased a 49% stake in the firm.[2] That stake was only disclosed to the public in January 2026 in a *Wall Street Journal*[3] report eight months later, which described that the President had subsequently struck a deal to sell AI chips to the UAE in May 2025. According to public reporting, the Trump family ultimately received approximately $187 million[4] from the World Liberty Financial transaction. Now, the Department has taken the extraordinary step of unilaterally upgrading the UAE's status under the Export Administration Regulations.

Last month, Under Secretary Kessler testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where I asked whether he, or you, had any conversations with representatives of World Liberty Financial or members of the President's family regarding export restrictions on the UAE. Under Secretary Kessler testified that he had not participated in any such conversations but did not answer whether you had.

Accordingly, we ask that you respond to the following questions:

1. Have you ever participated in any conversation with a representative of World Liberty Financial or a member of the President's family regarding export restrictions or export control policy affecting the United Arab Emirates?

2. Did the President or other White House staff ask you or staff at the Bureau of Industry and Security to reclassify the UAE in BIS's export control country groups?

3. Did the Departments of State, Energy, and Defense sign off the UAE's reclassification or was it a decision solely of the Department of Commerce?

4. Please describe the interagency review and process that ultimately led to the decision to reclassify the UAE to Country Group A:5. In addition, please provide all memoranda, legal analyses, interagency recommendations, intelligence assessments, and other documents relied upon in making this determination, including any records reflecting concurrence or dissent by participating agencies.

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[2] https://www.cnn.com/2026/02/01/politics/trump-family-crypto-world-liberty-financial-uae
[3] 'Spy Sheikh' Bought Secret Stake in Trump Company - WSJ
[4] https://www.cnn.com/2026/02/01/politics/trump-family-crypto-world-liberty-financial-uae

5. What specific changes in the UAE's conduct, regulations, or policies, including toward the People's Republic of China, led the Department to conclude that the UAE no longer posed a proliferation or diversion risk?

6. Please share the text of any government-to-government agreements or Memoranda of Understanding the Administration has struck with the UAE government related to export controls and/or the risk of proliferation or diversion.

We request that you provide responses to these questions no later than September 2, 2026.

Sincerely,

Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign Affairs