

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 5, 2019

Mr. Kenneth A. Blanco, Director
Financial Crimes Enforcement Network
2070 Chain Bridge Road
Vienna, Virginia 22182

Dear Director Blanco:

We write regarding the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network's (FinCEN) recently announced realignment of its Liaison Division as the Strategic Operations Division (Strategic Ops). The new division will reportedly be responsible for designing and implementing FinCEN's strategic partnerships with industry as well as state, local and U.S. Government colleagues. Congress is a vital partner in promoting national security by combating illicit finance. This realignment presents a unique opportunity to strengthen cooperation between Congress and FinCEN.

We think FinCEN should use the realignment to ensure that its information sharing with Congress is more robust, timely and transparent. Information requests from Congress, including legitimate Committee oversight requests related to Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs), often take months to process, and we understand that certain such requests have yet to be answered at all. In general, Congressional requests for such information should be handled in the order they are received, and prompt responsiveness by FinCEN is vital. Further, FinCEN must take steps to ensure that its partnership with Congress is free of partisan influence. FinCEN's integrity is vital to its mission, and any appearance of favoritism could compromise FinCEN's ability to promote national security.

We request a briefing from FinCEN to discuss how FinCEN and the new Strategic Ops realignment might be able to address these and other concerns. The cooperation of FinCEN and Congress is essential to our respective national, economic and financial security functions, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance



Sherrod Brown
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Banking
Housing, and Urban Affairs