

House Committee on Small Business
Tyler Robinson Transcribed Interview
June 3, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words before we begin this morning.

My name is Tyler Robinson. I am from North Carolina and graduated from North Carolina State in 2015 with a degree in Political Science. I came to Washington in 2022 to work for the Small Business Administration as Special Assistant to the Administrator and was promoted to the position of Special Advisor to the Administrator late last year. I'd like to make three brief points before we begin.

First, I would like to explain my work at the SBA. As Special Advisor with the rank of GS-12, I provided administrative support to Administrator Guzman. I assisted with her schedule by compiling her daily briefing book, which listed each day's events and included brief background memos for her meetings. While I occasionally helped draft portions of these event memos highlighting logistical details about the event, they were usually written by the SBA program office responsible for the subject matter of each meeting.

I also was part of a team that provided background and made recommendations about her schedule, but I was not responsible for the final decisions regarding her schedule or travel. I was not responsible for deciding who to invite to any given meeting, and I am not involved in setting or executing SBA policy.

My interactions with the White House regarding the Administrator's travel mostly involved compiling a list of the Administrator's completed and upcoming travel each week, which I emailed to the SBA's White House Liaison, who then emailed the report to the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs. Individuals at the White House Office of Cabinet Affairs would occasionally reach out directly to me with a logistical question about the information in the report.

I have never discussed the Administrator's or SBA's travel with Jeff Zients, the White House Chief of Staff, and I am personally not aware of the White House directing the travel of the SBA, including of the Administrator.

In fact, it is my understanding that the Administrator is responsible for determining her own meeting and travel schedule. It is her job to meet with small businesses, explain what we do, and how our work and policies benefit their businesses and communities. She travels to promote the SBA and its policies, and her goal is to travel to all fifty states, visiting with small business owners of all backgrounds.

In my work at the SBA, I have not seen the Administrator or anyone at the SBA use official time or resources to campaign for President Joe Biden or anyone else.

I am also not involved in scheduling or supporting any non-official travel or activities of the Administrator.

Second, I want to clarify that I have no role in the SBA's memorandum of understanding with the State of Michigan, which I understand is of interest to the Committee. I am not familiar with the MOU. I do not know how it came about or what it involves. My only memory of any discussion about it was a mention during a meeting about the press release announcing the MOU. In sum, I don't have any information about the MOU to share with you.

Third, I want to address the video that was posted online by the O'Keefe Media Group. I believe this video is the reason that the Committee has asked to speak with me.

In March 2024, I was contacted on a dating app by a person who identified herself as Grace. We ended up meeting twice over drinks and dinner on what I believed to be personal dates. Grace (which may not be her real name) represented herself as an ardent Democrat who was concerned that President Biden would not win re-election and she questioned me repeatedly about what the SBA was doing to help him. I know now that she was lying to me and that she was recording me without my knowledge or consent.

I first learned of the secret recording when it was posted to the internet. I have never seen the unedited footage of our two dates, but it is clear from watching the video that someone has clipped and selectively reordered statements to fit their false narrative about the SBA.

Watching the video is embarrassing. It is painful to see myself trying to impress a date only to learn, along with the rest of the world, that she was lying and tricking me all along.

It is also uncomfortable to admit that, in trying to impress my date, I overstated my role with the SBA as well as my knowledge of the workings of the White House. I have no personal knowledge of how decisions are made in the White House and who is involved. And in trying to make my date feel less anxious about the November election, I found myself agreeing with misstatements that she made and making misstatements myself.

The result is a selectively edited, misleading video. In the video, I agree to—and say—things that are not accurate and do not reflect the agency’s true work and priorities. I am personally sorry for any confusion or misunderstanding that this has caused about the SBA or Administrator Guzman.

I also have been personally hurt by the social media backlash. With my name being public, people have found my public profiles and attacked me, requiring me to suspend social media accounts to ensure my safety.

I hope that my testimony today helps correct any false impressions that the Committee may have gotten from this doctored and dishonest video.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.