

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 26, 2018

Mr. Andrew Intrater
Chief Executive Officer
Columbus Nova
900 Third Avenue, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. Intrater:

We are writing about recent reports that Columbus Nova, “an American company linked to a Russian Oligarch,” paid approximately \$500,000 to Essential Consultants, a “shell company ...used to pay hush money” created by President Trump’s personal attorney, Michael Cohen.¹ Columbus Nova has confirmed an arrangement with Mr. Cohen, but provided few details, stating that, “After the inauguration, the firm hired Michael Cohen as a business consultant regarding potential sources of capital and potential investments in real estate and other ventures.”²

As you know, in May 2018 we opened an investigation into similar payments made to Mr. Cohen by Novartis and AT&T. As part of this investigation, we have learned new information about additional connections between Mr. Cohen and Columbus Nova. This information is summarized in a new investigative report released July 13, 2018.

The information we obtained revealed that you, on behalf of Yamo Pharmaceuticals, solicited Mr. Cohen’s help to raise capital for the company. In response to your request, Mr. Cohen sent to Novartis’s then-CEO Joe Jimenez a pitch book detailing the company and the investments you were seeking. This pitch book also detailed close relationship between Columbus Nova and Yamo. A slide titled “Yamo Organizational Structure,” identified several key Yamo personnel, including Eugene Prahin, Chief Financial Officer of Yamo and Chief Operating Officer for Columbus Nova. The slides sent by Mr. Cohen also lists you as a key Yamo shareholder,³ and Columbus Nova is identified as providing “Back Office and Finance Services” for Yamo. In a letter to Senate Finance Committee minority staff, counsel for Yamo Pharmaceuticals represented that you, in your capacity as CEO of Columbus Nova, directed Mr. Cohen to seek investment in Yamo from Novartis.

In addition to the questions raised by the findings of our joint report, public reporting also raises additional questions about your ties to Viktor Vekselberg, the sanctioned Russian oligarch, and to President Trump and the Trump administration. For example, you are Columbus Nova’s

¹ New York Times, Firm Tied to Russian Oligarch Made Payments to Michael Cohen (May 9, 2018) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/08/us/politics/michael-cohen-shell-company-payments.html>).

² Columbus Nova, Columbus Nova Statement in Response to Inaccurate Media Reports (2018) (<http://www.columbusnova.com/>).

³ August 24, 2017 email from Cohen to Jimenez, “August 2017 Non-Confidential Short Yamo Presentation.pptx”.

Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Vekselberg's cousin, and Renova, which is controlled by Mr. Vekselberg, remains your company's largest client.⁴ Following the 2016 election, you donated \$250,000 to President Trump's inauguration, and you and Mr. Vekselberg were reported to have "attended the event together and met with Mr. Cohen there."⁵

Public reporting also indicates that Columbus Nova began paying Mr. Cohen in January 2017 and that shortly thereafter, he worked with Ukrainian politician Andrii Artemenko to hand deliver a proposal "outlining a way for President Trump to lift sanctions against Russia" to the office of then-National Security Advisor Michael Flynn.⁶ At least one press report indicates that Mr. Vekselberg planned to fund this effort through Columbus Nova.⁷

Mr. Vekselberg has reportedly been questioned by investigators for Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating links between the Russian government and individuals associated with the 2016 presidential campaign of Donald Trump.⁸ In addition, Special Counsel Mueller reportedly subpoenaed and interviewed Mr. Artemenko earlier this year.⁹

This new information about Mr. Cohen's connections to Columbus Nova – and his efforts at your instigation to raise money for the firm and to connect the firm to Novartis – combined with the earlier reports of the \$500,000 payments to Mr. Cohen, raise questions about the scope of Columbus Nova's relationship with Mr. Cohen and what Columbus Nova obtained or sought through this relationship as well as your own relationship with Mr. Cohen.

To address these concerns, we ask that you provide responses to the following questions no later than August 9, 2018:

Questions regarding Columbus Nova:

⁴ New York Times, At Trump Tower, Michael Cohen and Oligarch Discussed Russian Relations (May 25, 2018) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/25/us/politics/michael-cohen-viktor-vekselberg-trump-tower.html>)

⁵ New York Times, Firm Tied to Russian Oligarch Made Payments to Michael Cohen (May 9, 2018) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/08/us/politics/michael-cohen-shell-company-payments.html>).

⁶ New York Times, Firm Tied to Russian Oligarch Made Payments to Michael Cohen (May 9, 2018) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/08/us/politics/michael-cohen-shell-company-payments.html>).

New York Times, A Back-Channel Plan for Ukraine and Russia, Courtesy of Trump Associates (February 19, 2017) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/19/us/politics/donald-trump-ukraine-russia.html>).

⁷ The Atlantic, Senate Investigators May Have Found a Missing Piece in the Russia Probe (June 7, 2018) (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/06/former-gop-congressman-embroiled-in-the-russia-probe/562343/>).

⁸ New York Times, Firm Tied to Russian Oligarch Made Payments to Michael Cohen (May 9, 2018) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/08/us/politics/michael-cohen-shell-company-payments.html>).

⁹ The Daily Beast, Michael Cohen's 'Peace Plan' Pal Speaks (May 30, 2018) (<https://www.thedailybeast.com/michael-cohens-peace-plan-pal-speaks>).

Columbus Nova is not a publicly traded company, and therefore has little published information about its structure. According to reports, the company was “founded in 2000 as ‘the U.S.-based affiliate of the Renova Group,’” a holding company for the Russian oligarch Viktor Vekselberg.¹⁰ An archived version of the Renova Group’s website claims Columbus Nova as an affiliate company,¹¹ and SEC filings previously identified Columbus Nova as “the U.S.-based affiliate of the Renova Group.”¹² Both Vekselberg and Renova Group were sanctioned by the United States Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control in April 2018 for their role in the Russian government’s “malign activity around the globe, including continuing to occupy Crimea and instigate violence in eastern Ukraine, supplying the Assad regime with material and weaponry as they bomb their own civilians, attempting to subvert Western democracies, and malicious cyber activities.”¹³

1. Please describe in detail the ownership structure of Columbus Nova, including but not limited to affiliates and business units such as Renova U.S. Management.
2. Please identify the beneficial owners of Columbus Nova.
3. Please describe the relationship between Columbus Nova and the Renova Group, both past and present.
4. Please describe the relationship between Columbus Nova and Mr. Vekselberg, both past and present.
5. What relationship, if any, do you personally have, or does Columbus Nova or its related entities have, with Andrii Artemenko?
6. In light of the April 2018 imposition of U.S. sanctions against Mr. Vekselberg and the Renova Group, please describe what controls you, Columbus Nova, and related entities have put in place to ensure compliance with those sanctions.

Questions related to Yamo Pharmaceuticals:

7. Please describe your role and investment in Yamo Pharmaceuticals, directly or indirectly through Columbus Nova or any other entity, including but not limited to any role that you play in supervising the Services Agreement under which Renova U.S. Management provides back office services to Yamo.

¹⁰ Columbus Nova: A Family Office for a Russian Billionaire Owned by Americans, May 9, 2018, www.forbes.com/sites/nathanvardi/2018/05/09/columbus-nova-a-family-office-owned-by-americans/#7b4604f84c20.

¹¹ Renova Group website, accessed via the Internet Archive (November 14, 2017) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20171114040349/http://www.renova.ru/en/structure/company/detail/130/>).

¹² Columbus Acquisition Corp., Amendment No. 4 to Form S-1 Registration Statement, May 17, 2007, <https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1381526/000114420407027094/v075970s1a.htm>.

¹³ United States Department of the Treasury press release (April 6, 2018) (<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm0338>).

8. Please describe your role and investment in Hoffman Technologies LLC both directly and through Columbus Nova. Who are the beneficial owners of Hoffman Technologies LLC?
9. Please identify any and all communications that you had with Michael Cohen related to, or on behalf of Yamo Pharmaceuticals and provide copies of any and all e-mails, faxes, phone and other records related to those communications.
10. Please identify any and all communications that you had with any employee or representative of Novartis related to, on behalf of Yamo Pharmaceuticals and provide copies of any and all e-mails, faxes, phone and other records related to those communications.

Questions regarding Michael Cohen:


11. When was Mr. Cohen hired by Columbus Nova? When was he terminated?
12. What were the terms and conditions of this arrangement?
13. Please provide a copy of any written agreement between Mr. Cohen, Essential Consultants, or any entity managed or controlled by Mr. Cohen, and Columbus Nova.
14. Explain Columbus Nova's decision to consider hiring Mr. Cohen. What specific skills or knowledge did he bring to Columbus Nova? Which individuals at Columbus Nova were responsible for hiring Mr. Cohen?
15. Please provide a list of all payments made to Mr. Cohen, including the amount, the dates of the payment, and the originating and receiving bank information.
16. Why did Columbus Nova terminate the relationship with Mr. Cohen? Which individuals made the determination to do so?
17. How was the amount of Columbus Nova's payments set? Was the amount and payment structure based on a proposal by Mr. Cohen or by Columbus Nova?
18. Columbus Nova has described its relationship with Mr. Cohen in this way: "After the inauguration, the firm hired Michael Cohen as a business consultant regarding potential sources of capital and potential investments in real estate and other ventures."¹⁴ Please describe any specific projects Mr. Cohen worked on for Columbus Nova. Please describe any business consulting activity performed by Mr. Cohen related to "potential sources of capital and potential investments in real estate and other ventures."
19. Please provide a list of all related companies or Columbus Nova investment vehicles for which Mr. Cohen provided consulting services.
20. Was Mr. Cohen ever paid or contracted to conduct consulting services by Columbus Nova or any related entity concerning Yamo Pharmaceuticals?

¹⁴ Columbus Nova, Columbus Nova Statement in Response to Inaccurate Media Reports (2018) (<http://www.columbusnova.com/>).

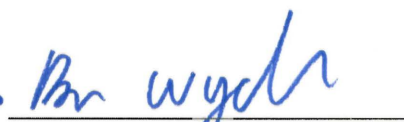
21. In addition his activity with Yamo Pharmaceuticals noted above, did you direct Mr. Cohen to solicit investments on behalf of any other entities in which you, Columbus Nova, or any of Columbus Nova's related entities had a financial interest?
22. Did you or any other Columbus Nova official or any official of a related entity request or direct any contacts between Mr. Cohen and President Trump (either before or after the Presidential inauguration) or any other official working for the Administration or on the Presidential Transition? Are you aware of any such contacts? If so, please list and describe them.
23. Do you or do any other current or former Columbus Nova officials have any knowledge of the disposition of any funds paid by Columbus Nova to Essential Consultants or Mr. Cohen? Were any of these funds ultimately received by Mr. Trump, or any member of the Trump family, or the Trump Organization, or were they used to pay debts or liabilities of President Trump, his family, or the Trump Organization? Did any Columbus Nova official believe or intend, or have reason to believe or intend, that any payments made to Mr. Cohen would be provided, in full or in part, to Mr. Trump or to any legal entity in which Mr. Trump or his immediate family had an ownership interest?
24. Did you or any other entities in which Columbus Nova was invested have any contractual relationship or pay any funds to Mr. Cohen or to any other entity or individual affiliated with, associated with, or represented by Mr. Cohen? If so, please list all such relationships or payments.
25. Please provide copies of all communications between Columbus Nova and Mr. Cohen, including to Essential Consultants or any other entity or individual related to Mr. Cohen, including in his capacity as an employee of the Trump Organization.
26. Please provide copies of any other Columbus Nova communications related to Mr. Cohen or Essential Consultants.
27. Please provide a complete, un-redacted copy of any contract with Mr. Cohen or Essential Consultants, and any amendments, statements of work, attachments, fee schedules or other related documents.
28. Did or does Columbus Nova or any related entity or officers thereof, including you, have any other contractual relationship with or pay any funds to any other entity or individual affiliated with, associated with, the Trump Campaign, the Trump Organization, or any member of the Trump family? If so, please list all such relationships or payments, including relevant dates.
29. Is Columbus Nova fully cooperating with any and all federal or state law enforcement inquiries related to Essential Consulting or Mr. Cohen or any other matter?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

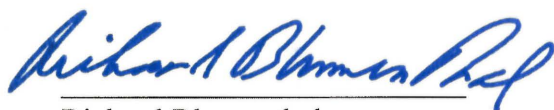
Sincerely,




Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator