Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 2026

Elon Musk
Chief Executive Officer
Space Exploration Technologies Corporation
1 Rocket Road
Hawthorne, CA 90250

Dear Mr. Musk,

Your company's Starlink communications system has been instrumental in allowing Ukraine to defend itself against Russian missile and drone attacks targeting civilians. Access to Starlink has recently been throttled or cut off entirely, without a clear explanation as to why.

Since the failure of his ground invasion, Russian leader Vladimir Putin turned to a brutal air campaign targeting Ukrainian civilians to wear down public morale. Just last month, more than 300 Ukrainian civilians were killed and 2,000 injured by Russian drone and missile strikes. Ukraine has built an innovative network of drone systems to defend against the thousands of strikes launched each month by Russia. However, these life-saving systems often depend on Starlink's military version, Starshield, for accurate communication and transmission of targeting data.

Last week on October 13, 2026, Ukrainian officials said that their forces suddenly lost access to Starshield communications inside Ukraine for drones moving over 100 miles per hour. That interruption halted Ukraine's ability to guide its self-defense drones against incoming Russian missiles and drones and stopped Ukrainian attacks against Russian positions.[1] That very night, Russia launched a record-setting coordinated drone and missile barrage at Ukrainian civilian energy infrastructure, using at least 39 ballistic and hypersonic missiles and 128 Shahed-type drones. The strikes killed at least three civilians, including a child, and injured at least 21.

You have publicly asserted that limits to Starlink access are "decided by the U.S. military and ultimately POTUS."[2] Yet public reporting indicates that you personally brought the suggestion to President Trump to slow down Ukrainian communications through SpaceX's Starlink systems,[3] and U.S. government officials have reportedly indicated that you personally ordered the speed cap on Ukrainian military use of Starshield.[4] Reports published yesterday indicate that President Trump called you to personally ask for restoration of Starshield capabilities and the President has asserted it was restored, and yet public reports indicate the system remains severely restricted for Ukraine's defense forces.[5][6]

---

[1] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/10/14/world/europe/ukraine-starlink-energy.html

[2] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/10/14/world/europe/ukraine-starlink-energy.html

[3] https://newrepublic.com/post/216758/elon-musk-trump-ukraine-starlink-restrictions

[4] https://www.wsj.com/world/ukraine-starlink-elon-musk-trump-dbc49193

[5] https://www.ft.com/content/e67a3d0e-5893-45a5-b098-64a68a4ef032

[6] https://www.wsj.com/world/trump-called-musk-and-asked-him-to-lift-ukraine-starlink-restrictions-5aeebc6e

As a publicly traded company, SpaceX has a legal obligation to disclose to shareholders and the public material events that could affect your business model. The revelation that you personally wielded control over a foreign country's military communications would require disclosure of elevated risks for corporate governance, geopolitical exposure, and potential adverse actions by foreign governments. We therefore ask for your responses to the following by October 31, 2026:

1. Have you or any SpaceX official at any point discussed limiting Starlink access for Ukrainian forces inside Russia or Ukraine with Russian President Vladimir Putin, President Trump, or any officials or representatives acting on their behalf? Please provide any such communications or records of communications.
2. Did you, SpaceX, or entities operating on SpaceX's behalf reduce, shut off, or throttle Starlink access to Ukrainian forces this month—either inside Russia or Ukraine? If so, why and on whose orders?
3. Have you or any official at SpaceX communicated to Ukrainian officials any conditions or actions required for a full or partial resumption Starlink access for Ukrainian defense forces?
4. Did President Trump or the White House, in fact, make a request to restore Ukraine's access to Starlink and Starshield systems? Have those systems been fully restored? If so, when? And if not, why not?
5. Which specific individuals, agencies, or entities control the operational decisions from this day forward on restoring full and non-capped access to Starlink and Starshield communications systems for Ukrainian forces?

Sincerely,

Peter Welch
United States Senator

Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign Affairs

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

Jason Crow
Member of Congress

CC:

- Gwynne Shotwell, President and COO, SpaceX Corporation
- Ira Ehrenpreis, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation
- Randy Glein, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation
- Antonio J. Gracias, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation
- Donald Harrison, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation
- Steve Jurvetson, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation
- Luke Nosek, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation
- Roelof Botha, Member, Board of Directors, SpaceX Corporation