Involves Don Jr.

Pentagon conditional loan to a startup backed by Don Jr.'s fund

B Reported

The loan commitment is a primary record (A). 1789 Capital's stake is reported by ProPublica (read via Defense One) and acknowledged by 1789, which says it had no role in the loan; the Bloomberg and Financial Times reports were not opened. ProPublica's account of Navarro initiating the deal is single-outlet reporting based on interviews and records.

9 sources **1** primary record **9** with an archived copy

REACHED THE FAMILY

Aug 2025 month precision

$620,000,000 exact

Amount is the government's conditional loan commitment, not money paid to the family. 1789 Capital's stake size is undisclosed. Rep. Raskin's letter, citing Bloomberg (Mar 19, 2026), and the New York Times (Jul 22, 2026) both put Vulcan's value at about $200 million when 1789 invested and about $2 billion later; that rise is in the company's value, not a realized gain to the family. Commerce also signed a nonbinding letter of intent for $50 million in incentives and will take $50 million in equity.

FROM Vulcan Elements (company)

CHANNEL equity stake through 1789 Capital

OFFICIAL ACTION

Nov 21, 2025

Office of Strategic Capital conditional loan commitment of $620 million to Vulcan Elements, part of a joint $700 million commitment with ReElement Technologies

AGENCY Department of Defense (Department of War), Office of Strategic Capital; Department of Commerce CHIPS Program Office

No day count is calculated because at least one of the two dates is known only to the month or year.

WHAT HAPPENED

Don Jr.'s venture firm 1789 Capital took a stake in Vulcan Elements, a North Carolina startup that makes rare earth magnets, about three months before the deal below, according to ProPublica; Bloomberg and the Financial Times also reported the investment. The size of the stake has not been disclosed.

About three months later, on November 21, 2025, the Pentagon's Office of Strategic Capital announced a conditional commitment to lend Vulcan $620 million. The Commerce Department also signed a nonbinding letter of intent for $50 million in incentives and will take a $50 million equity stake. A conditional commitment means no money moves until the company clears due diligence.

ProPublica later reported, based on interviews and Defense Department records, that White House trade adviser Peter Navarro asked the Pentagon to make the loan, and that it was the only deal among dozens under review that a top presidential aide initiated. The New York Times and Bloomberg, the latter as cited in Rep. Jamie Raskin's letter, put Vulcan's value at about $200 million when 1789 invested and about $2 billion later. Democratic lawmakers have asked the White House and the company for records, and in August 2026 four Democratic lawmakers asked the Pentagon's inspector general to review the award process, saying Navarro may have breached federal ethics rules.

POTENTIAL VIOLATION

Conflict of interest questions over a White House aide initiating a federal loan to a company backed by the president's son, including whether Peter Navarro breached federal ethics rules on impartiality. No statute has been cited; the August 2026 letter to the inspector general cites a federal ethics regulation, 5 C.F.R. 2635.502, as to Navarro.

STATUTE OR CLAUSE	None cited
RAISED BY	Sens. Elizabeth Warren, Richard Blumenthal and Mazie Hirono and Reps. Jason Crow and Mike Levin (letter to Susie Wiles, June 2026); House Natural Resources Committee Democrats (May 2026); Sens. Elizabeth Warren, Richard Blumenthal and Tammy Duckworth and Rep. Robert Garcia, ranking member, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee (letter to the Defense Department Inspector General, Aug 4, 2026)

This is a potential violation as described by the party named. No charge has been filed in this entry; the ledger does not call anything a crime below tier D.

THEIR RESPONSE

The Pentagon says no company gets preferential treatment and political connections play no role. 1789 Capital says it had no role and learned of the loan when it went public. A spokesperson for Don Jr. says he did not discuss the company with Navarro. Navarro called the reporting fake news.

SOURCES

U.S. Department of War Nov 21, 2025 primary
Office of Strategic Capital Agrees to Joint $700M Conditional Loan Commitment with Vulcan Elements and ReElement Technologies
archived copy

Bloomberg Aug 26, 2025 news
Malik's 1789 Said to Back Defense, Rare-Earth Magnet Startups
archived copy Not opened (paywall); cited as listed in Wikipedia references

Financial Times Dec 9, 2025 news
Donald Trump Jr-backed start-up scores $600mn US federal government deal
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ProPublica May 28, 2026 news
The White House Intervened to Get a $620 Million Deal for a Company Tied to Donald Trump Jr.
archived copy Read through ProPublica republication on Defense One

Defense One (republishing ProPublica) Jun 3, 2026 news
https://www.defenseone.com/policy/2026/06/lawmakers-pentagon-loan-trump-jr/413962/
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House Natural Resources Committee Democrats May 2026 congressional
https://democrats-naturalresources.house.gov/media/press-releases/huffman-garcia-demand-documents-from-vulcan-elements-after-white-house-pushed-through-620-million-loan-to-company-tied-to-donald-trump-jr
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House Judiciary Committee Democrats Aug 26, 2026 congressional
Letter from Rep. Raskin to 1789 Capital
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The New York Times (via The Boston Globe) Jul 22, 2026 news
https://www.bostonglobe.com/2026/07/22/business/donald-trump-jr-investments-white-house/
archived copy NYT original is paywalled; read through the Boston Globe's syndicated copy

Sens. Warren, Blumenthal and Duckworth and Rep. Garcia Aug 4, 2026 congressional
Letter to DoD Inspector General re corruption in Pentagon awards process
archived copy

Last verified Oct 21, 2026.

REACH CONGRESS

Committees with jurisdiction over this kind of action:

HOUSE Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, Energy and Commerce

SENATE Armed Services, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Commerce Science and Transportation

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