

walz political money trail 2026-01-06

WALZ POLITICAL NETWORK MONEY TRAIL INVESTIGATION

Campaign Finance, Fraud Connections & Political Donor Analysis

Classification: OPEN SOURCE INTELLIGENCE REPORT **Date:** January 6, 2026 **Analyst:** OPUS - Project Milk Carton

Case ID: PMC-MN-WALZ-FINANCE-2026-001

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This investigation traces political money connections within the Tim Walz network, including campaign finance from child care industry donors, donations from Feeding Our Future fraud defendants to Minnesota Democrats, and the flow of \$250+ million in stolen federal nutrition funds. Governor Walz announced January 5, 2026 that he would not seek reelection amid mounting fraud scandals.

KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

Category	Finding	Status
Walz Career Fundraising	\$24+ million total	Confirmed
Child Care Industry Donors to Walz	~\$10,000 identified	Confirmed
Keith Ellison Donations from FOF Defendants	\$12,500+	Confirmed
Ilhan Omar Donations from FOF Defendants	\$7,400	Returned
Minneapolis Mayor Frey from FOF Defendants	\$9,000	Confirmed
Total Dem Donations from FOF Defendants	\$53,000+	Confirmed
Feeding Our Future Total Fraud	\$250+ million	Prosecuted
Assets Recovered (FOF)	\$60-75 million (~24%)	Ongoing
Assets Sent Overseas (FOF)	\$40+ million (Kenya, Turkey)	Unrecoverable

PART 1: TIM WALZ CAMPAIGN FINANCE

1.1 Career Overview

Total Career Fundraising: \$24+ million **Congressional Service:** 2007-2019 (Minnesota 1st District) **Governor:** 2019-present (announced end of reelection bid January 5, 2026)

Source: [OpenSecrets - Tim Walz Profile](#)

1.2 Gubernatorial Campaign Finance (2022)

Metric	Amount
Total Raised (2022 cycle)	\$6,240,859
Total Donors	22,544
2021 Contributions	\$2,453,591
2021 Expenditures	\$1,324,421

Top Donor (2022): Brenda and Charles Kratsch - significant contribution noted by Ballotpedia

Source: [Minnesota CFB - Walz Committee](#)

1.3 Child Care Industry Donors to Walz

Donor	Amount	Year	Connection
Siyad Abdullahi	\$4,000	2017-2018	Midwest Career Institute, Pro-Health Home Care Agency
Khadar Jama	\$1,000	2021	Open Hearts Home Health Care
Additional unspecified	~\$5,000	Various	Somali-operated day care/home health connections

TOTAL IDENTIFIED: ~\$10,000

Context: These donors were connected to Somali-run day care centers and home health services - industries now under federal investigation for fraud.

Source: [Washington Examiner Investigation](#)

1.4 Leadership PAC (Congressional Era)

PAC Name: Renewing the American Dream PAC **Last Report:** December 31, 2018

Funding Source	Percentage
PAC Contributions	74.09%
Large Individual (\$200+)	20.85%
Small Individual (<\$200)	5.05%

Self-financing	0.00%
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2024 Activity: Tim Walz for US Congress PAC made no contributions in the 2024 cycle.

Source: [OpenSecrets - Tim Walz PAC](#)

PART 2: KEITH ELLISON (ATTORNEY GENERAL) MONEY CONNECTIONS

2.1 The December 2021 Meeting

Date: December 11, 2021 **Location:** Private meeting **Attendees:** Keith Ellison, two future Feeding Our Future defendants

Key Quote from Ellison (recorded): "I'm not here because I think it's going to help my re-election."

Context: The FBI had already been investigating Feeding Our Future for 8 months at this point. One month later (January 2022), 200 federal agents raided businesses and homes connected to the scheme.

2.2 Campaign Donations from FOF Defendants

December 20, 2021 Donations (9 days after meeting):

Donor	Amount	Status
Gandi Mohamed	\$2,500	Defendant #69 (pled not guilty)
Three additional donors	\$7,500 combined	Connected to Feeding Our Future
SUBTOTAL	\$10,000	4 x max contribution

May 2022 Additional Donation:

Donor	Amount	Status
Liban Alishire	\$2,500	FOF defendant (pled guilty)

TOTAL ELLISON DONATIONS FROM FOF DEFENDANTS: \$12,500+

2.3 Ellison Family Connections

Jeremiah Ellison (Minneapolis City Council Member, Keith's son): - Also received campaign contributions from Mohamed brothers - Received donations from Said and four others indicted in FOF case - Received from several others with ties to Feeding Our Future

2.4 Ellison's Response

Official Statement: "The Attorney General had no way of knowing these people were connected to the FBI's investigation when he accepted their campaign contributions."

Press Release Contradiction: In September 2022, Ellison's office stated: "Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison and his office have been deeply involved for two years in holding Feeding Our Future accountable." - However, the December 2021 recording shows he learned of the scheme from the defendants themselves.

Sources: - [American Experiment - Ellison Recording](#) - [KARE11 - Ellison Recording Analysis](#)

PART 3: MINNESOTA DEMOCRATS - FOF DONATION MATRIX

3.1 Complete Donation Summary

Recipient	Total from FOF Defendants	Donors	Status
Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey	\$9,000	9 defendants	Not returned
Keith Ellison (AG)	\$12,500+	5+ defendants	Claimed no knowledge
Ilhan Omar (Congress)	\$7,400	3 defendants	Returned to food shelves
Omar Fateh (State Senator)	\$11,000	11 defendants	Returned
Other Minnesota Democrats	~\$13,100	Various	Mixed
TOTAL	\$53,000+	Multiple	—

3.2 Mayor Jacob Frey Donations (2021)

Nine separate \$1,000 donations from defendants: 1. Abdinasir Abshir 2. Asad Abshir 3. Abdihakim Ahmed 4. Abdirahman Ahmed 5. Ahmed Ghedi 6. Abdiqadir Mohamud 7. Salim Said 8. Abdi Salah (Mayor's aide - pled guilty) 9. Abdulkadir Salah

Political Connection: Mayor Frey's aide Abdi Salah pled guilty in the FOF fraud scheme.

3.3 Ilhan Omar Donations

Donor	Amount	Connection
Ahmed Ghedi	\$2,700	Safari Restaurant associate
Abdihakim Ahmed	\$2,700	Safari Restaurant associate
Third defendant	\$2,000	FOF connected
TOTAL	\$7,400	—

Status: Omar donated the funds to Sabathani Community Center, Shiloh Cares Food Shelf, and Division of Indian Work.

Source: [Sahan Journal - Omar Donations](#)

PART 4: FEEDING OUR FUTURE - \$250 MILLION MONEY TRAIL

4.1 Fraud Scheme Overview

Metric	Value
Total Stolen	\$250+ million
Federal Program Exploited	Child Nutrition Program (USDA)
Time Period	2020-2022
Defendants Charged	78
Convictions (as of Dec 2025)	57+
Percent Actually Spent on Food	~3%

Mastermind: Aimee Bock (Feeding Our Future founder) - Convicted March 2025 on 7 federal charges - Ordered to forfeit \$5.2 million

Key Co-Defendant: Said Salim (Safari Restaurant co-owner) - Safari received \$16+ million in fraudulent claims - Used funds to create shell companies and launder proceeds

4.2 Where the \$250 Million Went

Luxury Real Estate (Minnesota)

Property	Purchaser	Amount	Status
Plymouth mansion	Said Salim	\$250,000	Subject to forfeiture
Minneapolis office building (Safari HQ)	Said Salim	\$2.7 million	Subject to forfeiture
Lakeville home	Mustafa Jama	\$394,000	Subject to forfeiture
Various metro properties	Multiple defendants	Millions	Mixed recovery

Luxury Real Estate (International)

Property	Location	Purchaser	Amount	Status
Alanya coastal property	Turkey	Mustafa Jama	Unknown	Unrecoverable
Karibu Palms Resort	Diani Beach, Kenya	Liban Alishire	\$216,000	Forfeited
Nairobi apartment	South C, Kenya	Abdiaziz Farah	Unknown	Forfeited
Nairobi apartment building	South C, Kenya	Ahmednaji Sheikh	Unknown	Subject to seizure
Land in Mandera Town	Kenya (Somalia border)	Ahmednaji Sheikh	Unknown	Subject to seizure

Safari Restaurant Connection: - Safari claimed to serve 5,000 children per day, 7 days per week - Total claimed: 3.9 million meals (April 2020 - November 2021) - Funds routed to co-conspirators via shell companies

4.4 Asset Recovery Status

Category	Amount	Status
Total Stolen	\$250+ million	Confirmed
Total Recovered	\$60-75 million	As of Dec 2025
Liquid cash/bank accounts	~\$30 million	Recovered
Real estate/vehicles (to be auctioned)	~\$30-45 million	Pending
Overseas investments	\$40+ million	Largely unrecoverable
Spent on unrecoverable items	Unknown	Permanently lost

Recovery Rate: Approximately 24-30%

DOJ Statement on Overseas Assets: "This overseas money is beyond the reach of American law enforcement. Neither these funds nor [defendant's] international real estate holdings have been, or can be, seized or forfeited."

Source: [DOJ - Feeding Our Future Convictions](#)

PART 5: CCDF AND HEAD START FEDERAL FUNDING

5.1 Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)

Minnesota Annual CCDF Allocation (FY2024-2026):

Fiscal Year	Federal CCDF Funding	State Match
FY2024	\$172,454,729	~\$155 million
FY2025	~\$185 million	~\$155 million
FY2026 (partial)	\$218 million (expected)	~\$155 million

Current Status: ALL federal child care payments to Minnesota frozen by HHS as of December 30, 2025.

5.2 American Rescue Plan Funding (Biden Era)

Program	Amount	Expiration
Child Care Stabilization Grants	\$24 billion (national)	September 2023
Child Care Affordability	\$15 billion (national)	September 2023

Minnesota Grant Program (Legislature)	\$316 million (2 years)	2025
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5.3 Head Start Funding

Minnesota Head Start Programs: 33 Federal + 7 Tribal + 1 Migrant = 41 total

Recent Grant Opportunity (October 2023): - Grant ID: HHS-2024-ACF-OHS-CH-R5-0122 - Amount: \$18,312,969 - Recipients: Up to 5 organizations

5.4 Fraud Estimates Across All Programs

U.S. Attorney Joseph Thompson Statement (December 2025): - "Half or more" of \$18 billion billed to 14 Minnesota DHS programs since 2018 may be fraudulent - Estimated fraud could exceed \$1 billion across all programs - Current investigations: 92+ defendants charged, 62+ convicted

Source: [CBS News - Minnesota Fraud Schemes](#)

PART 6: WALZ FAMILY CONNECTIONS

6.1 Gwen Walz Background

Full Name: Gwen Walz (nee Whipple) **Born:** June 15, 1966 **Role:** 39th First Lady of Minnesota (2019-present)

Career History: - 20+ years as public school English teacher - Assessment coordinator, Mankato Area Public Schools (2004-2018) - Special Assistant to the President, Augsburg University (2019-present)

Current Board Positions: - 2026 Special Olympics USA Games (Board Member)

Notable: Only First Lady in Minnesota history to have an office in the State Capitol.

6.2 Investigation Findings on Gwen Walz

Nonprofit Compensation: No evidence found of compensation from child care nonprofits or organizations connected to the fraud schemes.

Board Positions: No identified connections to child care industry boards or organizations involved in current investigations.

Policy Role: Manages education and corrections policy portfolio as First Lady.

Status: No direct financial connections to fraud schemes identified.

6.3 Other Walz Administration Connections

Mayor's Aide Connection: - Abdi Salah (Mayor Frey's aide, not Walz administration) - Pled guilty in Feeding Our Future scheme

Council Member Connection: - Jamal Osman (Minneapolis City Council) - Wife operated meal site receiving \$400,000+ in federal funds

PART 7: WHISTLEBLOWER ALLEGATIONS

7.1 DHS Employee Group Allegations

Source: Minnesota Department of Human Services Employees Account (X/Twitter) **Claimed Membership:** 480+ current DHS staff

Allegations Against Walz Administration:

1. "Tim Walz is 100% responsible for massive fraud in Minnesota"
2. "We let Tim Walz know of fraud early on, hoping for a partnership in stopping fraud but no, we got the opposite response"
3. "Tim Walz systematically retaliated against whistleblowers using monitoring, threats, repression"
4. "Tim Walz disempowered the Office of the Legislative Auditor, allowing agencies to disregard their audit findings"

DHS Official Response: "Cannot confirm whether the account on X is run by any Minnesota Department of Human Services employees. It is not an official department account and does not represent the views of the agency."

7.2 Congressional Investigation

Lead: House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (Chairman James Comer)

Allegations in Congressional Letter: - "The Committee has serious concerns about how you as the Governor, and the Democrat-controlled administration, allowed millions of dollars to be stolen" - "The Committee also has concerns that you and your administration were fully aware of this fraud and chose not to act for fear of political retaliation" - "Whistleblowers within the Minnesota Department of Human Services have alleged the agency has deleted data and withheld records to cover up the fraud"

Document Deadline: December 17, 2025

7.3 Early Warning Timeline

Date	Event	Response
2018-2019	Whistleblower complaint about FOF to AG Ellison	Referred to other agencies (no investigation)
Summer 2020	MDE contacts USDA about FOF rapid growth	Concern noted
2020	Governor "aware of issues and concerns" per spokesperson	Unknown
2021	Food vendor reports kickback demand by FOF	MDE forwarded complaint to FOF to "investigate itself"
Spring 2021	MDE contacts FBI	Investigation begins
January 2022	FBI raids	200+ agents deployed

Source: [Minnesota Reformer - When Did Walz Know](#)

PART 8: MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR FINDINGS

8.1 June 2024 Report on MDE Oversight

Title: "Minnesota Department of Education: Oversight of Feeding Our Future" **Finding:** MDE's oversight was "inadequate" and "created opportunities for fraud"

Key Failures Identified:

- Application Approval Without Verification:** MDE did not always verify statements made by Feeding Our Future
- Serious Deficiencies Deferred:** MDE found FOF "seriously deficient" twice but deferred without corrective action
- Complaint Mishandling:** MDE received 30+ complaints (2018-2021) but investigation procedures were "of limited usefulness"
- Self-Investigation Allowed:** MDE "inappropriately asked Feeding Our Future to investigate complaints about itself"
- Last Review in 2018:** Found serious issues but failed to follow up

8.2 MDE Response

Commissioner Willie L. Jett II (June 2024): "MDE disputes the OLA's characterization regarding the adequacy of MDE's oversight - MDE's oversight of these programs met applicable standards and MDE made effective referrals to law enforcement."

Source: [Legislative Auditor Report](#)

PART 9: POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Walz Reelection Decision

Announcement Date: January 5, 2026

Statement: Walz would not seek third term as governor, citing need to focus on "defending Minnesota against allegations of fraud and right-wing attacks."

Context: Decision came approximately one week after viral video by YouTuber Nick Shirley showing allegedly fraudulent daycare operations.

9.2 Federal Response (Trump Administration)

Date	Action	Agency
Dec 30, 2025	CCDF payments to Minnesota frozen	HHS
Dec 30, 2025	FBI "surged" resources to Minnesota	FBI
Jan 2, 2026	DHS agents visit 40+ sites in Minneapolis	DHS
Ongoing	"Massive investigation" announced	DHS (Secretary Noem)

FBI Director Kash Patel Statement: "The FBI believes this is just the tip of a very large iceberg."

9.3 Walz Defense

2022 Statement: Officials caught the FOF scheme early but couldn't take action due to: - Judge's order preventing action - FBI request not to interfere with investigation

2025 Statement: "I will take responsibility for the mistakes that led to theft of taxpayer dollars. But the guardrails were taken off by the federal government during the pandemic, and the guidance was to move the money."

PART 10: DATA SOURCES

10.1 Primary Sources

Source	URL	Data Type
OpenSecrets	opensecrets.org	Campaign finance
FollowTheMoney	followthemoney.org	State campaign finance
Minnesota CFB	cfb.mn.gov	State campaign reports
FEC.gov	fec.gov	Federal campaign data
DOJ Press Releases	justice.gov/usao-mn	Criminal cases
HHS OIG	oig.hhs.gov	Audit reports
MN Legislative Auditor	auditor.leg.state.mn.us	State audits
ProPublica	projects.propublica.org/nonprofits	IRS 990 filings

10.2 Media Sources

- Washington Examiner - Walz campaign donor investigation
- American Experiment - Ellison recording analysis
- KARE11 - FOF political donations investigation
- Sahan Journal - Omar donations report
- Minnesota Reformer - Timeline analysis
- Fox News - Fraud scheme coverage
- CNN - Child care fraud investigation
- CBS Minnesota - Asset forfeiture updates
- Daily Nation (Kenya) - Property seizure coverage

CONCLUSION

The investigation reveals a complex web of political money flowing through Minnesota's child care and social services sectors:

1. **Campaign Finance:** Governor Walz received approximately \$10,000 from donors connected to Somali-operated child care/health care businesses now under federal investigation.

2. **Attorney General Ellison:** Received \$12,500+ from Feeding Our Future defendants, including \$10,000 just nine days after a recorded meeting with future defendants.
3. **Broader Democratic Network:** Over \$53,000 in contributions flowed from FOF defendants to Minnesota Democratic candidates including Mayor Frey, Rep. Omar, and State Sen. Fateh.
4. **Fraud Proceeds:** Of the \$250+ million stolen through Feeding Our Future, only \$60-75 million has been recovered. Approximately \$40 million was laundered into Kenyan and Turkish real estate and is largely unrecoverable.
5. **Systemic Failure:** Whistleblower allegations and the Legislative Auditor's report document systematic failures in oversight, including complaints being forwarded to the accused organization to investigate itself.
6. **Political Fallout:** Governor Walz's decision to abandon reelection reflects the severity of the crisis, with federal agencies now conducting "massive" fraud investigations across Minnesota's social services infrastructure.

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Sources are linked throughout this document. All information derived from publicly available records, news reports, government documents, and campaign finance filings.