

Governor Terry Branstad

Potential Red Flags

Governor Branstad Has Been A Big Proponent Of Trade Deals And Free Trade, Including TPP. (Erin Murphy, "Govs Express Support For New Trade Deal," *Quad City Times*, 7/16/16)

In October 2016, Branstad Said Some Of Trump's Comments Were Reprehensible, But Stood By His Support For Trump. (Jason Noble, "Iowa Republicans Denounce Trump But Do Not Rescind Support," *Des Moines Register*, 10/8/16)

QUESTIONS FOR TERRY BRANSTAD

Political Vulnerabilities

Criticisms of President-elect

Background: Branstad has said some of the President-elect's comments are reprehensible, but has never wavered in his support of the campaign.

- **Given the tumultuous nature of this campaign season, would you commit to standing by the President and express full public support during turbulent periods should you serve in the administration?**
- **Do you have any specific reservations to putting full support behind the President-elect's issues agenda and policy platform?**

Disclosure Controversies as Governor

Background: Branstad has been criticized for allowing the Iowa state government to conceal legal settlements with ex-state workers from the public. Branstad's administration has also been criticized for maintaining a "do not hire" list.

- **What would you say to the critics of the Iowa state government who assert your administration lacks transparency?**
- **Is there anything the President-elect's team should know surrounding reporting your administration sought to keep legal settlements with former state employees private?**

Policy Questions

Support for Current U.S. Trade Agreements

Background: Branstad is an on the record advocate of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and a consistent supporter. Branstad has also expressed support for other existing U.S. trade agreements.

- **Are you willing to support the President-elect's plan to renegotiate the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or completely pull out of it?**
- **Are you willing to assist with renegotiation of the agreement, and other U.S. trade agreements, if called upon by the President-elect?**
- **Will you support all of the President-elect's positions on current U.S. free trade agreements?**

Generic U.S. Diplomat/Ambassador

- **What do you view as the focus areas or issues a U.S. diplomat should prioritize when engaging with a foreign nation?**
- **Will you have any issues advocating for the President-elect's full agenda/policy platform as it applies to wherever you may serve?**
- **Are there any regions of the world or certain relationships you would prefer to avoid should you join the administration?**

China Policy

Background: Last week, the President-elect accepted a congratulatory call from Taiwanese leader Tsai Ing-wen. This phone call interrupted 40 years of U.S. 'precedent,' and was heavily criticized by the Obama administration and segments of the foreign policy academic-class. Since winning the election, the President-elect has also begun publicly asserting what he views as the specific shortfalls in U.S. China relations, especially the economic relationship. The President-elect has indicated he is prepared to completely alter current trading patterns with China. The next Ambassador to China and Secretary of State will be retooling the Clinton-Obama "Asia Pivot" that the American people rejected.

- **The President-elect's recent call with the Taiwanese President was the first of its kind by a U.S. President-elect or sitting President since the U.S. switched diplomatic recognition to China from Taiwan in 1979. This interruption in precedent caused China to indicate displeasure with the phone call. How would you look to steady day-to-day U.S.-China relations while maintaining the President-elect's desire to rewrite many aspects of our nation's longer term relationship with China?**
- **The President-elect's threat to slap large tariffs on Chinese imports could prompt China to shut off market access and raise tariffs on American imports. How do you foresee upholding the President-elect's pledge to renegotiate our trading patterns with China?**
 - **Do you have any issues with the President-elect's tactic of publicly disclosing his desire to improve the U.S.'s standing in its relationship with China, and the methods by which he may realize that desire?**
- **China has made aggressive land-grabbing moves in the South China Sea, even going so far as to create artificial islands to claim more contested waters. International rulings have gone against China's actions and claims, to no avail since they are not enforceable. What coalitions would you create, or negotiations would you hope to facilitate with China, to counter this threat?**
- **The United States recently announced that it will deploy THAAD anti-missile technology in South Korea to defend our Asian allies from North Korea. This declaration angered China, which has threatened to take countermeasures should THAAD be actively deployed. How would you effectively balance the need to protect our Asian allies with the fear that China will react adversely?**

BACKGROUND

Personal Information

Terry Edward Branstad

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Education

University of Iowa

Iowa City, IA

AND

Drake University

Des Moines, IA ([Office Of The Governor Of Iowa](#) Accessed 12/4/16)

Work Experience

1972 - 1978: Member of Iowa House of Representatives

1978 - 1982: Iowa Lieutenant Governor

1983 - 1999: Governor of Iowa

2003 - 2009: President of Des Moines University

2011 - Present: Governor of Iowa ([Office Of The Governor Of Iowa](#), Accessed 12/4/16)

Political Contributions

According to Opensecrets, Branstad Has Donated To All Republicans, Including Donald Trump, Joni Ernst, Steve King, Chuck Grassley, And The Republican Party Of Iowa. ([Center for Respective Politics](#) Accessed 12/4/16)

Contributor	Occupation	Date	Amount	Recipient
BRANSTAD, TERRY E MR [REDACTED]	INFORMATION REQUESTED	10/3/16	\$1,000	Trump, Donald (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E MR [REDACTED]	STATE OF IOWA	6/30/15	\$500	Ernst, Joni (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	STATE OF IOWA	7/16/14	\$500	Young, David
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	STATE OF IOWA	7/11/14	\$500	Blum, Rod
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	STATE OF IOWA	6/13/12	\$240	King, Steven A (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	STATE OF IOWA	3/31/12	\$2,500	King, Steven A (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	STATE OF IOWA	9/22/11	\$250	Latham, Tom (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	5/26/09	\$500	Grassley, Chuck (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIV	1/20/09	\$1,000	Republican Party of Iowa (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	10/10/08	\$250	Schmett, Kim (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	9/2/08	\$250	Miller-Meeks, Mariannette Jane (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	7/30/08	\$250	Schmett, Kim (R)

BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIV	1/15/08	\$1,000	Republican Party of Iowa (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]		11/15/07	\$250	King, Steven A (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIV	1/9/07	\$1,000	Republican Party of Iowa (R)
TERRY E BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	9/29/06	\$250	Lamberti, Jeffrey (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY GOV [REDACTED]	DMU	8/15/06	\$1,000	Whalen, Mike (R)
TERRY E BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	8/14/06	\$250	Lamberti, Jeffrey (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	BRANSTAD & ASSOCIATES INC.	5/11/06	\$400	American Institute of CPAs
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	4/18/06	\$250	Latham, Tom (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	3/2/06	\$250	Leach, Jim (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIVERSITY	2/27/06	\$1,000	Lamberti, Jeffrey (R)
BRANSTAD, TERRY E [REDACTED]	DES MOINES UNIV	12/20/05	\$1,000	Republican Party of Iowa (R)

Criminal Filings

According To Nexis, Branstad Has No CRIMINAL FILINGS Filed Against Him. (Nexis, Accessed 12/5/16)

COMMENTS ON TRUMP-PENCE

Branstad Called Some Of Trump's Comments "Reprehensible" But Continued To Support Trump

In October 2016, Branstad Said Some Of Trump's Comments Were Reprehensible, But Stood By His Support For Trump. "Iowa Republicans stood by GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump on Saturday, even as they denounced the incendiary comments that are roiling his campaign and dividing Republicans across the nation. ... 'What he said was reprehensible and I'm glad that he's apologized for it,' Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad told reporters on Saturday night. 'But I think it's important that we recognize what's at stake in this country. We cannot continue the status quo.' ... Branstad's remarks to reporters Saturday night doubled down on an earlier statement from a spokesman saying the governor and Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds will continue to back Trump. 'Gov. Branstad and Lt. Gov. Reynolds think these comments were reprehensible and offensive but support the vision Donald Trump and Mike Pence have for a stronger, more secure America,' Branstad spokesman Ben Hammes wrote in the message to the Des Moines Register." (Jason Noble, "Iowa Republicans Denounce Trump But Do Not Rescind Support," [Des Moines Register](#), 10/8/16)

“Branstad’s Son, Eric, Is The Trump Campaign’s Iowa State Director. The Governor On Saturday Night Credited His Son For ‘Trying To Do The Very Best He Can Under Very Difficult Circumstances.’” (Jason Noble, “Iowa Republicans Denounce Trump But Do Not Rescind Support,” [Des Moines Register](#), 10/8/16)

Branstad Endorsed Trump In May 2016. “Iowa Governor Terry Branstad announced Monday that he now supports Donald Trump for president. He and a lot of Republicans thought Trump didn't have a prayer when he decided to run for president. Now at his news conference here today, Branstad says he's being a team player. Branstad says he underestimated Trump at first, but has since come around. ‘I'll be the very first to admit, you know this summer, when he came to the Iowa state fair, flew his helicopter around and all of this stuff I thought this is not going to last,’ said Branstad. ‘Well, I was wrong.’” (Todd Magel, “Branstad Don t Underestimate The Power Of Trump,” [KCCL](#), 5/9/16)

In January 2016, Branstad Said Ted Cruz Must Be Defeated For The Sake Of Preserving Iowa’s Ethanol Economy. “Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad would like to see Ted Cruz defeated, he said on Tuesday. The Iowa governor, whose powerful network of supporters is a prized political commodity, was speaking to reporters at the Iowa Renewable Fuels Summit. Branstad's son Eric is leading efforts to portray the Texas senator as hostile to ethanol, a narrative Cruz has been trying to stifle in recent weeks. Asked if he'd like the Texas senator to lose, Governor Branstad said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Ted Cruz is ahead right now. What we’re trying to do is educate the people in the state of Iowa. He is the biggest opponent of renewable fuels. He actually introduced a bill in 2013 to immediately eliminate the Renewable Fuel Standard. He’s heavily financed by Big Oil. So we think once Iowans realize that fact, they might find other things attractive but he could be very damaging to our state,’ Branstad said, according to the Des Moines Register.” (Eliza Collins, “Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad Cruz Must Be Defeated,” [Politico](#), 1/19/16)

GENERAL CONTROVERSY

Branstad Was Criticized For Allowing The State To Conceal Legal Settlements With Ex-State Workers From The Public

In 2014, It Was Revealed That Iowa State Agencies Made At Least 24 Secret Settlements With Current And Former State Workers Since Governor Branstad Resumed Office. “The accusations were contained in documents obtained by The Des Moines Register Monday after Gov. Terry Branstad revealed that 12 state agencies have made at least 24 secret settlements with current and former workers since he resumed office in January 2011.” (Jason Clayworth, “Branstad Discloses More Secret Settlements,” [Des Moines Register](#), 3/25/14)

- **Cases Show That Some Of The Workers Believed They Were Subjected To Discrimination, Inappropriate Behavior, And Retaliation For Blowing The Whistle On Bidding Practices.** “Newly disclosed secret settlements between state government and former public employees show that some of the workers believed they were subjected to discrimination, inappropriate behavior and retaliation for blowing the whistle on improper bidding practices. One of the workers who left state government but received a settlement was accused of failing to intervene when a fellow worker attacked a girl in state care. Yet another worker admitted sampling cinnamon vodka on the job.” (Jason Clayworth, “Branstad Discloses More Secret Settlements,” [Des Moines Register](#), 3/25/14)

Branstad Said He Wasn't Aware Of The Confidential Settlements Until He Saw The Media Report, And Then Signed An Executive Order Putting An End To The Practice. “Branstad answered questions publicly for the first time Monday about the controversy, which was prompted by a March 16 Register investigative report that uncovered six secret settlements by two agencies. Branstad said he wasn't aware of the confidential settlements until he saw the Register's report. He vowed Monday that ‘heads will roll’ if any secret settlements are made again. Branstad signed an executive order prohibiting confidentiality clauses in future settlements. ‘It is unacceptable,’ he said at his weekly news conference.

‘Iowans expect more from government. Iowans deserve better.’” (Jason Clayworth, “Branstad Discloses More Secret Settlements,” [Des Moines Register](#), 3/25/14)

“Of The 24 Secret Agreements That The Administration Acknowledged Monday, 10 Contain Lump-Sum Agreements That Totaled \$427,040. All Contained Confidentiality Clauses Prohibiting The Former And Current State Employees From Talking.” (Jason Clayworth, “Branstad Discloses More Secret Settlements,” [Des Moines Register](#), 3/25/14)

“Most Of The Six Employees Identified Earlier This Month By The Register Believe They Were Fired For Political Reasons. “One said she was offered and accepted an additional \$5,000 to sign a confidentiality agreement to keep the settlement secret. Branstad on Monday insisted that no settlements were related to political matters. The staffers instead were let go as a result of various reorganizations, he said.” (Jason Clayworth, “Branstad Discloses More Secret Settlements,” [Des Moines Register](#), 3/25/14)

One Of The Secret Settlements Was With An Official From The Chinese Association Of Iowa Which Was Upset When The Settlement Was Made Public

In 2014, The Chinese Association Of Iowa Executive Director Was Upset With Branstad After His \$100,000 Settlement With Governor’s Administration To Leave His State Job And Drop A Discrimination Suit Was Made Public. “Chinese Association of Iowa executive director Swallow Yan has helped connect Gov. Terry Branstad with Chinese presidents and residents, boosting relations between a farming state and a growing superpower with a huge demand for Iowa’s agricultural exports. But Yan is upset with Branstad these days after the governor’s administration made public a 2011 settlement showing Yan was paid \$100,000 to drop a discrimination lawsuit and resign his 16-year job at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Yan is among scores of state workers who signed employment agreements that were once private, but recently released amid a personnel scandal roiling Branstad’s administration. The details of his case are particularly significant because they touch on an issue of great importance to Branstad - Iowa’s relationship with China.” (Ryan Foley, “Branstad Scandal Ensnarers Key Iowa Link To China,” [Associated Press](#), 4/15/14)

- **“Yan And Four Other Veteran Employees Sued Managers Rick Hindman And Jeff Franklin In 2009 Alleging They Were Unfairly Targeted For Demotions, While Younger White Male Employees Were Favored. Yan Said That He Was Singled Out For Scrutiny By Hindman, Who Noted Staff Complaints About Yan’s Strong Chinese Accent And Language Skills In A Critical Performance Evaluation.** Department officials rejected Yan’s discrimination claims, and said that his job was reclassified to a lower level to reflect current duties. They said an investigation of his computer activities led to a reprimand for spending time on personal matters, a practice he said was common among other employees who weren’t targeted.” (Ryan Foley, “Branstad Scandal Ensnarers Key Iowa Link To China,” [Associated Press](#), 4/15/14)
- **“To Settle The Case In August 2011 - After Republican Branstad Had Taken Office - The Department Agreed To Pay Yan \$100,000 For Emotional Distress And Attorneys’ Fees And Removed All Discipline From His Personnel File. In Exchange, He Dropped The Lawsuit And Resigned.** He says state officials insisted on a provision requiring he not ‘actively seek to publicize the terms.’ Three others received payments totaling \$153,500.” (Ryan Foley, “Branstad Scandal Ensnarers Key Iowa Link To China,” [Associated Press](#), 4/15/14)

Branstad’s Administration Has Been Criticized For Keeping A “Do-Not-Hire” List

Branstad’s Administration Has Been Criticized For Keeping A “Do-Not-Hire” List. “Iowa has added 67 people to its ‘do-not-hire’ list in the past year through a process that a legislator and some public employee advocates believe is unethical or illegal. The state now maintains a list of 943 people who are ineligible to work for some or all executive branch departments or agencies, records obtained last week by The Des Moines Register show.” (Jason Clayworth, “Iowa Expands Do Not Hire List Despite Controversy,” [Des Moines Register](#), 6/15/15)

“State Officials Insist The List Is Important To Help Protect The Public And Keep Problematic Employees Off Iowa's Payroll.” (Jason Clayworth, “Iowa Expands Do Not Hire List Despite Controversy,” [Des Moines Register](#) 6/15/15)

The Iowa Department Of Administrative Services — Better Known As DAS — Released In April 2014 The List Of 975 Names Of Workers Disqualified Since 1990 From Future State Employment Because They Were Fired Or Resigned. “After ongoing pressure from media and some legislators, the Iowa Department of Administrative Services better known as DAS released in April 2014 the list of 975 names of workers disqualified since 1990 from future state employment because they were fired or resigned. The publication of the list was followed by government oversight hearings and a lawsuit filed by Des Moines attorneys Roxanne Conlin and Tom Duff on behalf of three former employees. Seventy-seven others last year expressed interest in joining the lawsuit had it become a class-action complaint against the state. As a result, Iowa yanked 91 names from the list less than a month after the lawsuit, dozens of them because the DAS determined their separations from the state didn't meet the legal criteria.” (Jason Clayworth, “Iowa Expands Do Not Hire List Despite Controversy,” [Des Moines Register](#) 6/15/15)

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE POSITIONS

Branstad Is A Supporter Of TPP And Free Trade

Branstad Is A Supporter Of TPP, Saying In July 2016, “It's Not Perfect And I Accept Some Constructive Criticism That Maybe We Can Do Better, But Let's Continue To Break Down These (Trade) Barriers.” “While they agreed no solution will fit every state, many of the governors who are in Iowa for this weekend's summer meeting of the National Governors Association said they can learn from successful programs in other states. Utah's governor spoke about a program to reduce poverty; Virginia's governor discussed steps taken there to prevent cyber attacks; Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, the event's host, talked about Iowa's program that helps provide housing and employment for retiring veterans. ... Governors support TPP: A bipartisan group of governors expressed strong support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a proposed international trade deal that has become a political issue in the U.S. The governors in support of the trade deal - including Branstad, Iowa's Republican governor - said it will benefit state's economies. ‘It's not perfect and I accept some constructive criticism that maybe we can do better, but let's continue to break down these (trade) barriers,’ Branstad said, adding that half of Iowa's economy is business exports.” (Erin Murphy, “Govs Express Support For New Trade Deal,” [Quad City Times](#), 7/16/16)

In 2015, Branstad Said, “The Trans-Pacific Trade Agreement (Also Known As The Trans Pacific Partnership) Has Now Been Agreed Upon And Must Be Approved By Congress. We Believe That Will Increase Exports By About \$5 Billion A Year And Agriculture Will Be The Biggest Beneficiary.” “Providing citizens with a glimpse into the future was the focus of Governor Terry Branstad's town hall meeting Tuesday, Oct. 20 in Boone. ... Unemployment has dropped from 6.1 percent to 2.8 percent. Likewise, the state-wide rate has declined nearly three percent, thanks to investments from large companies such as Google and Facebook and many other substantial agricultural companies. An increased emphasis on international trade missions have helped as well, he said. ‘The Trans-Pacific Trade Agreement (also known as the Trans Pacific Partnership) has now been agreed upon and must be approved by Congress,’ Branstad said. ‘We believe that will increase exports by about \$5 billion a year and agriculture will be the biggest beneficiary. It will include companies in Asia and the United States, Mexico, Chile and Japan, Korea and the Philippines.’” (Brandon Hurley, “Gov. Branstad Makes Boone County Visit,” [Boone News](#), 10/21/15)

Branstad Wrote A Letter To President Obama In 2011 Encouraging The President To Enact Pending Trade Agreements. “Take Gov. Terry Branstad of Iowa, for example. Branstad's state relies heavily on exports for its rich agricultural economy. In 2011, he wrote a letter to President Barack Obama asking his administration and Congress to enact pending trade agreements, estimating that the

agreements would add roughly 5,000 jobs in the beef, pork, and poultry industries in his state. In 2015, Branstad, along with Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds of Iowa, led trade missions to South Korea and Brazil, with Branstad saying in a release that his state had 'reaped benefits' from such missions." (Alan Smith, "Many Republicans Are Embracing Donald Trump's Fierce Trade Rhetoric," [Business Insider](#), 7/31/16)

Branstad Defended Trump's Position On Trade, Saying He Thinks Trump Isn't Anti-Trade But "He's Just Anti-Stupid Decisions." "Speaking with Business Insider at the Republican convention, the longest-serving governor in US history labeled Trump's position as 'not really antitrade he's just anti-stupid decisions.' 'And what I take it is as constructive criticism that we need to cut a better deal that treats America better,' he said at a lunch for the Iowa delegation in Cleveland, adding: 'We got to continue to break down barriers. We need free trade. It's absolutely critical for agriculture and for job growth.' He mentioned Trump's running mate, Gov. Mike Pence of Indiana, and his prior defense of free trade as proof that Trump's position would not be too far from his own. 'So I believe that Trump understands that we need to do a better job of protecting America's interests, but that doesn't mean we don't negotiate and try to get the best agreements we can get,' he said. 'We just got to quit doing stupid things like the Iran deal and some of these things.'" (Alan Smith, "Many Republicans Are Embracing Donald Trump's Fierce Trade Rhetoric," [Business Insider](#), 7/31/16)