

House Republican requests UFO talk from private contractor

BY ROBERT JONES AND STEPH WHITESIDE - 05/16/26

([NewsNation](#)) — As lawmakers continue to pursue transparency regarding alleged secret [UFO programs](#) operated by the Pentagon, one Republican is now pursuing private contractors.

Rep. [Eric Burlison](#) (R-Mo.) [announced Friday on social platform X](#) that he sent a letter to MIT Lincoln Labs regarding a “flying saucer talk” from 1952.

“I sent a letter to MIT Lincoln Labs asking for a classified 1952 briefing video referenced as a ‘flying saucer talk.’ Their attorneys wrote back fast,” he wrote. “They’ll comply within 30 days.”

“Congressional letters carry weight. We’re going to keep sending them,” Burlison added.

Whistleblower [David Grusch](#), whose testimony regarding alleged [secret retrieval programs](#) for UFOs, or Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAPS), kicked off a series of congressional hearings, has stated private contractors are [being used](#) to make it more difficult for lawmakers to obtain information on certain programs.

“If you really want to hide something from Congress, you don’t put it in a government file cabinet. You hand it to a private contractor, Burlison [wrote Thursday in a post online](#). “That’s why my investigation is following the trail into RAND, MITRE, Aerospace Corp, MIT Lincoln Labs, and the Northrop Grumman of the world.”

MIT Lincoln Laboratory is one of the oldest Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC) in the country, founded in 1951 to build the SAGE air defense network.

FFRDCs are a special class of government contractors that work on long-term projects and have access to classified information, as well as proprietary information that for-profit contractors are legally barred from seeing.

Over time, the facility has been at the center of U.S. defense research and development, from ballistic missile defense to electronic warfare, work that is rarely seen by the public.

The MIT Lincoln Laboratory, along with others, including MITRE, RAND, IDA, the Aerospace Corporation, JPL and Sandia, was designed in the 1940s and 1950s to retain wartime scientific capability outside the civil service.

That structure has led to a network of private nonprofits with classified access that ordinary contractors do not have and that also operate one legal step removed from the executive branch.

Grusch alleged in his testimony before Congress that private contractors are carrying out UFO crash-retrieval and reverse-engineering programs to shield them from congressional oversight.

That has been echoed by lawmakers, including Rep. Tim Burchett, R-Tenn., one of the leading voices around UFO disclosure, who has accused the Department of Defense of siloing information to avoid questions from Congress.

“The federal government learned to do this during the Second World War,” Burchett said. “You have to imagine Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the Manhattan Project, thousands of people working on the atomic bomb and less than 12 knew what it was.”

For lawmakers, the question is not just one of potential UFO programs but about where taxpayer money is being spent.

The Pentagon has denied the existence of UFO retrieval or reverse engineering programs and has stated there is no reason to believe UAP sightings are extraterrestrial in nature. President Trump directed his administration earlier this year to release its files related to UAPs.

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