

U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on the Judiciary

Washington, DC 20515-6216
One Hundred Fifteenth Congress

November 30, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Sessions:

After your recent appearance before the House Judiciary Committee, we remain deeply concerned about the security of our next federal elections.

On January 6, 2017, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released a joint assessment titled “Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections.” In that report, the Intelligence Community reaches a unanimous conclusion:

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election. Russia’s goals were to undermine public faith in the US democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm electability and potential presidency. We further assess Putin and the Russian government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump.

The Intelligence Community stands by this assessment today. Publicly available evidence overwhelmingly supports their conclusion. The threat of foreign influence in our elections is real, present, and endangers the most basic notions of democratic process. We believe these facts are more than enough reason to put the whole of government to work to secure the election process.

But on October 18, 2017 before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Ben Sasse asked you if the Department of Justice has taken adequate action to stop interference in our elections from Russia or other foreign adversaries. You responded: “**Probably not.**”

On November 15, 2017, while testifying before our Committee, the issue came up again. When Representative Hank Johnson asked whether you have ordered a review of what laws may need to be updated to protect our elections from foreign influence, you hedged your answer: “**We have discussed those matters, but no completion has been done We are not anywhere near where I would like us to be yet.**”

When Representative Pramila Jayapal asked you again whether you had ordered this review, you answered more directly: “**I have not.**”

Subsequently, Representative Brad Schneider pressed you as to why you had taken no additional steps to secure the next elections. You responded: "You raise a good point. **I have not followed through to see where we are on that.** I will personally take action to do so This one is important, and I acknowledge that."

Before the hearing concluded, you committed to Representative Schneider that the Department would expeditiously arrange a briefing to our Members on this topic. With less than a year until our next elections, we write today to request that briefing. Please be prepared to address: (1) any review by the Department of existing statutes that may require updating or amendment prior to the next election; (2) the Department's efforts to identify vulnerabilities in the federal election system; and (3) specific steps recommended by the Department to address those vulnerabilities.

We ask that you provide us with this briefing as soon as possible and no later than **December 14, 2017.**

We hope that you have made progress on each of these topics since your appearance before the Committee. Inaction here would be unacceptable. You have a responsibility to do everything in you power to ensure that our elections are free, fair, and void of foreign influence.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Bradley Scott Schneider

Lerold Walker

Janice Rash

Pranika Jayal

Mark

Reed Deutch

Hank Johnson

Ted W. Lieu

Dr. V. Gandy

Joe Lopez

Tom Swalwell

Hal Jordan

Theresa J. Le Kern Bass

David N. Coville

S. L. De

cc: Rep. Goodlatte, Chairman, House Judiciary Committee