

July 19, 2018

Dear Senator:

President Trump's disgraceful conduct this week in Helsinki, including his public press conference with Russian President Vladimir Putin, marked a dangerous new low for an administration unyielding in its commitment to scandal and deceit. The president's indifference to Russia's attack on our democracy poses a grave threat to the integrity of our democracy and to the rule of law.

It was a chilling dereliction of duty. President Trump took an oath office to "protect and defend" the Constitution of the United States. He has abdicated his pledge in repeatedly undermining our government's response to the ongoing crisis. He is failing to uphold his constitutional responsibilities.

We were heartened by the strong words of rebuke this week from members of both parties. We write today, however, to urge you to do everything in your power to uphold your responsibilities under Article I of the Constitution to serve as a check on this administration. Words of admonition are not enough.

We commend the senators who are doing everything they can to hold this president accountable, conduct oversight, and correct the course our country finds itself on today. But many members of the Senate, including those who wield gavels, could do much more to check the abuses of power by the president and his administration.

To be clear: the president, on the world stage, flagrantly undercut our intelligence community's assessment that Putin ordered an influence campaign to "undermine the US-led liberal democratic order" and "undermine public faith in the US democratic process," including through "covert intelligence operations," with a "clear preference for President-elect Trump."<sup>1</sup> As you know, the Trump-Putin Summit came mere days after a federal grand jury indicted 12 Russian military hackers who broke into the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, state boards of elections, secretaries of state, and companies that supply software and technology related to election administration.

Respectfully, we urge you to undertake the following actions, with haste:

- Pass a resolution strongly condemning President Trump's actions in Helsinki.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Intelligence Community Assessment: Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," Jan. 6, 2017, [https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA\\_2017\\_01.pdf](https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf).

- Strengthen and implement sanctions against Russia for their efforts to undermine democracy, including interference and hacking in our elections. We are pleased to see bipartisan dialogue on sanctions in just the past few days and urge you to convert the conversation into action.
- Convene immediate public hearings on what transpired between President Trump and President Putin last week, including the closed-door one-on-one meeting, the preparation that led to the Summit, and the fallout afterwards.
- Pass the bipartisan Special Counsel Independence and Integrity Act (S. 2644) and go firmly on record supporting the independence and integrity of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. We commend the strong bipartisan vote of this bill out of the Judiciary Committee in April.
- Demand that the president release his tax returns to help determine, in part, why the president attacked our NATO and European Union allies and aligns himself with Vladimir Putin.
- Do everything in your power to urge the extradition of Russian intelligence officers indicted for hacking our elections, stealing documents, and disseminating the materials.
- Strengthen the resiliency of state election infrastructure with necessary funding for states to institute sound cybersecurity protocols, voter-verifiable paper ballots, and risk-limiting audits to check election outcomes. The \$380 million in the omnibus spending bill earlier this year was an important down payment, but there is more to fund.

With so much at risk, we must work honorably together to put country before party and ensure that we make due on the promise of our democracy for the generations who come next.

Sincerely,



Karen Hobert Flynn  
President  
Common Cause

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