

September 10, 2018

Dear Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member McCaskill, Chairman Gowdy and Ranking Member Cummings:

On behalf of Common Cause's 1.2 million members and supporters, we strongly urge your committees to uphold their oversight responsibility and immediately investigate the many alarming claims made by a "senior official in the Trump administration" in the September 5th *New York Times* op-ed entitled, "[I Am Part of the Resistance Inside the Trump Administration.](#)"

President Trump's "erratic behavior," "impulsiveness," and "instability" are not traits that Americans want to see in the President of the United States. His "repetitive rants" and "reckless decisions" are extremely troubling allegations that could threaten our national security, undermine our credibility, and cause significant harm to many Americans and people around the globe. The "early whispers within the cabinet of invoking the 25th Amendment," which would allow the Vice President and a majority of the cabinet to declare that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties his office of the presidency, means that key officials with whom President Trump interacts have questioned his fitness for office.

To be clear: whistleblowers have been important throughout history. They are often the only way that the public learns about fraud or abuse, and they serve an important watchdog function.

At the same time, the op-ed raises significant questions about the internal operations of the White House that deserve your scrutiny. Op-ed author "Anonymous" takes credit for "thwarting" the president's "misguided impulses," and "working diligently from within to frustrate parts of his agenda." But the fact that Anonymous proudly proclaims there are "adults in the room" holding the line against the president's worst impulses moves us from whistleblower to an unelected and unaccountable shadow presidency by committee.

Unelected anonymous people making executive decisions is unsustainable. That is not the way the system is supposed to resolve fundamental questions about a president's capacity to serve. There are constitutional mechanisms to remove a president who is unable to fulfill the oath of office. Our democracy is threatened by ineptitude compounded by complicity of those



in power who do not exercise their co-equal responsibility of providing a check against instances outlined in Anonymous' op-ed.

Americans expect and deserve the highest levels of accountability from their public officials, especially the President of the United States. We respectfully urge you to immediately investigate and hold public oversight hearings to investigate the many alarming accusations in the September 5th *New York Times* op-ed, including how the president's senior staff is working to contain the President. We hope you will put country over party and begin prompt oversight.

Sincerely,



Karen Hobert Flynn
President
Common Cause

cc: All Members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee

Since 1970, [Common Cause](#) has been working to hold power accountable through lobbying, litigation, and organizing. Our non-partisan, pro-democracy work has helped pass hundreds of reforms at the federal, state, and local levels. We now have more than 1.2 million members around the country who are working to strengthen our democracy.