



May 9, 2017

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of our more than 800,000 supporters across the country, we are renewing our call for you to support the creation of an independent commission to investigate Russia's role in the 2016 election. An independent commission must be called to investigate the massive effort by the Russian government to influence the outcome of our election. This is the only way that the American people can have any confidence that they have received the full and fair investigation to which they are entitled.

Over the past few months, given the hyper-partisanship around the issue, it has become increasingly evident that any investigation must occur outside of Congress. Chairmen of the committees charged with investigating possible Trump campaign collusion with the Russian government should not be attempting to tamp down news coverage of the Russian attack at the behest of the White House. The only way Americans will get the full truth about Russia's campaign to sway the 2016 election is with an investigation of the scandal by a commission completely independent of Congress. That commission must be vested with the powers, staff, and budgeting to fully and fairly investigate the Russian campaign for the presidency.

The many standing and select committees with overlapping jurisdiction over the issue have oversight responsibilities, conduct hearings, hold mark-ups, and in some cases, vet presidential nominees. An independent commission composed of former elected officials, retired judges, academics, and other highly-respected individuals can solely focus its task on the issue at hand. An independent commission can help restore faith and confidence in government by determining the facts of the case, making recommendations to prevent future attacks on our elections, and establishing best practices for government agencies, political parties, and other entities involved in elections.

Even if there was no collusion by the Trump campaign, the fact remains that the Russian government executed a prolonged and massive effort to help elect the candidate of its choice in our presidential election. The consensus of all 17 U.S. intelligence agencies is that the Russian government interfered in the election to help Trump win. Russian election interference used to be a problem for other nations, but now it is our problem, and it is one we must fully investigate. With last week's hacking and release of sensitive campaign information in advance of France's election, time is of the essence because our 2018 midterm elections are fast approaching. Russian efforts to influence the elections of other nations clearly are ongoing, and

there's no reason to believe they won't try to influence congressional elections, as Russia likely did in 2016.

This new "Cold War" with Russia has just begun. Its meddling in the elections of other nations has shown that Russia's interference in our elections will not stop until we stop it. Preventing future election meddling by Russia begins with the creation of an independent commission.

Sincerely,

Karen Hobert Flynn
President
Common Cause