

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 25, 2016

The Honorable James B. Comey  
Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation  
FBI Headquarters  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20535

The Honorable Ashton B. Carter  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1300 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable James R. Clapper  
Director of National Intelligence  
Office of the Director of National  
Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20511

Dear Director Comey, Secretaries Kerry and Carter, and General Clapper:

As senior Members of national-security committees in Congress, we are deeply troubled by reports of a Russia-supported hacking of Democratic National Committee data, and we applaud the FBI's quick action launching an investigation. We request that the Administration brief members of Congress on this situation as soon as possible in unclassified or classified settings as needed.

We see two separate issues at play here, both of which deserve the focus of investigators and Congressional overseers.

First, the DNC hack was plainly cyber-crime. More and more, America's adversaries are employing cyber-theft and cyber-terrorism as tactics to threaten our security. We need to understand fully the extent of the hack and work to determine who was responsible. We need to assess whose personal information was compromised by the attack and ensure those individuals have what they need to prevent any further damage. We need to determine what vulnerabilities allowed this attack to succeed, and provide information to the public about how to guard against future attacks of this nature.

Second—and perhaps more important—the timing and content of the theft, targeting one of our two major political parties, makes clear that this cyber-attack amounts to more than a public embarrassment or harmless mischief. If reports of Russia's involvement are confirmed, the only reasonable conclusion is that leaders in Russia are stealing and disseminating information in an effort to sway an election in the United States.

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This is an action right out of President Putin's playbook. In recent years, Russia has influenced elections, infiltrated political parties across Europe, and stoked divisive politics in the hope of fracturing Western unity. It doesn't stretch the imagination that Mr. Putin would now try his hand at manipulating the course of American democracy—leaking information through a syndicate that has repeated anti-Semitic insinuations, endangered lives, and threatened American security by recklessly releasing stolen information. That scenario should sound the alarm for people across this country.

That's why we also ask that the FBI collaborate with the Departments of State and Defense and the Intelligence Community to obtain a complete picture of Russia's involvement and its leaders intentions. Nearly a half century ago, a break-in at the DNC headquarters eventually led to the end of a Presidency. For a foreign government to engage in the same sort of behavior cannot be tolerated. Russia doesn't get to put its thumb on the scale in our elections. In the days ahead, we need to send a clear message to Russia's leaders and all who mean us harm: we will not allow the Kremlin or any other foreign power to dictate the terms of political debate in this country.

With the clock ticking down to our election, we ask for quick action on this matter. The American people deserve to go to the polls in November confident that Russian subterfuge has had no role in setting the agenda for our country's future.

Sincerely,



ELIOT L. ENGEL  
Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



JOHN CONYERS, JR.  
Ranking Member  
House Judiciary Committee



BENNIE G. THOMPSON  
Ranking Member  
House Homeland Security Committee