

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 13, 2016

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

Dear Director Clapper:

We request an immediate National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) regarding Russian efforts to manipulate the recent U.S. presidential election, including public release of its key judgments no later than January 20, 2017. Recently disclosed U.S. intelligence findings as publicly reported that Russia interfered in the U.S. presidential election and sought to undermine our democratic institutions – and the consequences thereof (including possible future such attacks on the United States) – are deeply concerning. They make it imperative that information be provided to the public and Congress. Quite simply, deliberate interference in our election to favor a particular candidate is an unprecedented breach and threat to U.S. democracy and national security.

On Saturday, December 10, 2016, the *Washington Post* reported that the CIA concluded in a secret assessment that Russia intervened in the 2016 presidential election to help a particular candidate win the election. It further reported that U.S. intelligence agencies have identified individuals with connections to the Russian government who provided WikiLeaks with thousands of hacked emails from the Democratic National Committee and others, including Hillary Clinton's campaign chair. Russia was also reported to have had a role in cyber intrusions in at least two U.S. state election systems. These were described as individuals or actors known to the intelligence community and part of a wider Russian operation to boost one candidate over the other. The *Post* quoted a senior U.S. official briefed at an intelligence presentation made to some U.S. senators as saying, "It is the assessment of the intelligence community that Russia's goal here was to favor one candidate over the other, to help Trump get elected." Also reported was that intelligence agency briefers told some senators as recently as last week that it was now "quite clear" that electing Trump was Russia's goal. In fact, you were quoted in early October as saying, "We believe, based on the scope and sensitivity of these efforts, that only Russia's senior-most officials could have authorized these activities."

Under President Putin, Russia has taken aggressive actions that are contrary to American interests and those of its key allies. Its military has seized land in Georgia and Ukraine and aggressively tried to sow disinformation and instability in European democracies. It plants false news, promotes a distorted and false narrative about threats to Russia and ethnic Russians in border states, funds political parties sympathetic to Russian interests, and reportedly conducts cyberattacks against key Western interests. Its proxies were recently implicated in a coup plot in Montenegro and were involved in murdering more than 300 innocent civilians in a downed commercial airline over occupied eastern Ukraine. Russian military forces have aggressively probed NATO-member airspace and waters, and conducted reckless intercepts of U.S. aircraft in international airspace. It has reportedly tried to manipulate upcoming German elections. Finally, Russian State TV host and Putin confidant Dmitry Kiselyov – also known as the Kremlin's Chief Propagandist – warned this year that "impudent" U.S. behavior towards Russia

may have “nuclear” consequences. Quite simply, Russia is determined to foster political chaos and institutional mistrust in the West and may have alarmingly succeeded in the United States.

Given the serious nature of these matters, with unprecedented national security implications, we believe that our intelligence community must prioritize a conclusive, public NIE to lay out the facts of this serious matter for the American people. Threats to our national security and the sanctity of our democratic process must not become hostage to partisanship and narrow political interests. We know that Russia continues to make a concerted effort to undermine democratic institutions in the West and we fear we have fallen victim to their agenda. Such an attack on the United States must not go undisclosed.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Patrick J. Leahy  
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



Al Franken  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



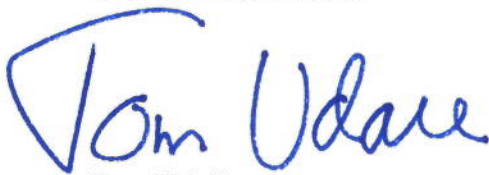
Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Tom Udall  
United States Senator