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JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE,
[SENIOR HOUSE DEMOCRAT]



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April 5, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Gowdy,

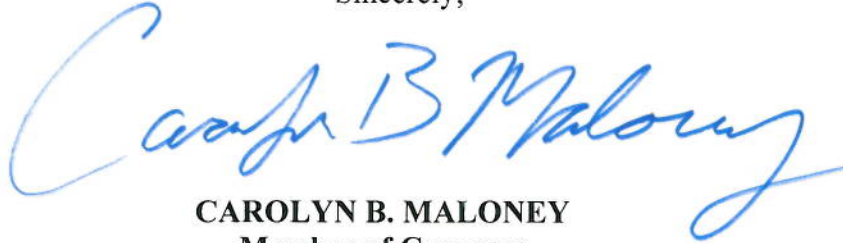
Russia's interference in our country's 2016 presidential election, as well as other countries' national elections, is well documented. That is why the Obama Administration and Congress committed \$120 million in 2016 for the State Department to counter these actions by Russia and why Congress recently provided an additional \$250 million for this effort in the recently passed FY 2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill. Shockingly, however, the State Department has thus far failed to spend any of these funds. Based on this lack of action, and seemingly lack of concern, I am deeply afraid that the Administration will continue to resist Congress's direction on this matter. I am requesting that the Committee hold a hearing to examine the Trump Administration's response to any present or future threat Russia or other foreign adversaries pose to our election process.

U.S. Intelligence agencies have confirmed that Russian state entities sought to undermine our democratic process by spreading propaganda intended to sow discord throughout the American electorate to influence the outcome of the 2016 Presidential election. Furthermore, intelligence officials believe that this strategy is likely to be repeated in future U.S. elections, as well as elections abroad. Unfortunately, President Trump has continued to deliberately minimize Russia's actions and undermine the U.S. response to Russian election interference. Making matters worse was the President's call congratulating Russian President Vladimir Putin for his victory in what many experts characterize as an illegitimate election. U.S. commitment to protecting our free and open elections needs to be unequivocal and if the Trump Administration cannot live up to the standard, then Congress must act to make sure it does.

Unfortunately, reports indicate that the State Department's Global Engagement Center, which is tasked with countering Russian meddling in our election process, remains critically understaffed with only 23 analysts, zero Russian language speakers, and an inability to hire new experts because of a Department-wide hiring freeze. Conducting thorough oversight of the Center's ability to do its work and the Department's actions to address foreign interference in our elections should be a priority for the Committee.

Unless the U.S. acts, Russian interference in our democratic process will be allowed to continue. That is why I urge you to call a hearing into the Administration's refusal to invest resources that Congress provided to protect our election processes. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carolyn B. Maloney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carolyn" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Maloney".

CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

cc: Hon. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform