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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

September 19, 2018

The Honorable Christopher Wray  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20535-0001

Dear Director Wray,

I write today to express concern over risks to the safety of the men and women in our law enforcement and intelligence communities and to the independence of the Department of Justice, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), following President Trump's recent order to "immediately" declassify selective portions of documents and text messages related to the investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Such a declassification presents a clear risk to exposing highly-sensitive information that was gathered to provide the legal basis for the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act application on former Trump campaign aide, Carter Page. As you well know, the U.S. Intelligence Community (USIC) often faces profound dangers in collecting such intelligence and providing this information to the U.S. Government. Up until the President's September 17<sup>th</sup> order, there has always been the implicit understanding that sources and methods will not be released for political purposes, which puts lives at risk. This order has the potential to have a further chilling effect on information-sharing agreements between agencies of the USIC and their foreign partners.

I am also concerned that President Trump's order threatens to obstruct the ongoing investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller into the Kremlin's election interference and disrupt the FBI's ability to maintain independence. President Trump's decision to personally insert himself into the investigative process constitutes a dangerous attempt to infringe upon the impartiality of the Department of Justice and the FBI.

I urge you to make every attempt during this process to ensure that any documents released do not expose the sources and methods of intelligence collection or impede ongoing investigations.


To ensure that the safety of FBI employees and the independence of your investigations remain at the forefront of any review or release of materials, I respectfully request a response to the following questions:

1. Has Attorney General Sessions recused himself from this matter? If so, who is in charge of the review at the Department?
2. Were you consulted before the President publicly released this order?
3. Would compliance with President Trump's order result in the release of information related to any ongoing investigations or intelligence operations or compromise any sources and methods used by the USIC?
4. What steps are being taken to ensure that sensitive information or personally identifiable information is not released or attributed to any current or former FBI employees during this process?
5. What steps are you taking to ensure the independence of the current investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election or any other related investigation in light of the President's order?

Finally, I request that you brief members of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee on the process and results of the completed declassification review prior to releasing the declassified information to the general public. I know we are both concerned that this information will ultimately reach the hands of America's adversaries, as well.

I thank you for your attention to this matter, and request that you respond by October 1, 2018.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

CC: The Hon. Jeff Sessions, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice  
The Hon. Rod Rosenstein, Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice