

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 9, 2025

The Honorable Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Dear Director Patel:

Since 2020, we have conducted oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) corrupt handling of Hunter Biden's laptop. While your predecessor opted to stonewall and ignore our multiple requests for information on the matter, we expect that under your leadership the FBI will be transparent with Congress. The American people deserve to see every document, along with a detailed explanation of how the FBI handled the laptop since the day they first possessed it on December 9, 2019.¹

In September 2020, we released a report titled, "Hunter Biden, Burisma, and Corruption: The Impact on U.S. Government Policy and Related Concerns" and we released a supplemental report on November 18, 2020.² On October 15, 2020, the *New York Post* reported on the contents of Hunter Biden's laptop.³ On October 17, 2020, Senator Johnson wrote to then-FBI Director Christopher Wray about a whistleblower who contacted Senator Johnson's office and reported that he provided the contents of Hunter Biden's laptop to the FBI in response to a December 9, 2019 grand jury subpoena.⁴ Senator Johnson requested information about the FBI's handling of the laptop and whether the whistleblower's claims were valid.⁵ In response, the FBI informed Senator Johnson "the FBI cannot provide any additional information in response to the enumerated questions in your [Oct. 17, 2020] letter."⁶

¹ Letter from Ron Johnson, Chairman, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, U.S. Dep't of Justice. Oct. 21, 2020, [https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2020-10-21%20letter%20from%20RHJ%20to%20DOJ%20OIG%20re%20FBI%20\(laptop\).pdf](https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2020-10-21%20letter%20from%20RHJ%20to%20DOJ%20OIG%20re%20FBI%20(laptop).pdf).

² S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. & S. Comm. on Fin., *Hunter Biden, Burisma, and Corruption: The Impact on U.S. Government Policy and Related Concerns* (Sept. 2020), https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/HSGAC_Finance_Report_FINAL.pdf; S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. & S. Comm. on Fin., *Majority Staff Report Supplemental* (Nov. 2020) <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-johnson-release-supplement-report-potential-conflicts-interest-stemming>.

³ Emma-Jo Morris and Gabrielle Fonrouge, *Emails reveal how Hunter Biden tried to cash in big on behalf of family with Chinese firm*, NY POST (Oct. 15, 2020), <https://nypost.com/2020/10/15/emails-reveal-how-hunter-biden-tried-to-cash-in-big-with-chinese-firm/>.

⁴ Letter from Ron Johnson, Chairman, Comm. On Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. to Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Oct. 17, 2020.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Letter from Jill C. Tyson, Ass. Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Federal Bureau of Investigation to Ron Johnson, Chairman, Comm. On Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff., Oct. 20, 2020.

Due to the FBI's lack of transparency relating to the handling of Hunter Biden's laptop, on October 21, 2020, Senator Johnson requested Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz open an investigation into the FBI's handling of the laptop.⁷ On February 17, 2021, the Inspector General informed Senator Johnson that the Inspector General's office would not be taking any investigatory actions on the matter.

Inspector General Horowitz wrote:

Subsequently, in December 2020, Hunter Biden publicly stated that the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) in Delaware advised his legal counsel that the USAO was investigating his tax affairs. Earlier this month, the Department announced that the U.S. Attorney in Delaware was one of the two U.S. Attorneys asked to remain in his role in the new administration. In light of these circumstances, and consistent with the OIG's practice, **we will not take actions that could interfere with an ongoing investigation.**⁸

On April 1, 2025, Catherine Herridge and Michael Shellenberger published a report and released FBI "chat messages" from October 2020, which revealed that FBI officials were "actively shutting down discussion of the [Hunter Biden] laptop's credibility before the 2020 presidential election."⁹ These October 2020 internal messages appear to corroborate whistleblower information that we previously released highlighting the FBI's widespread efforts to downplay and undermine investigatory steps relating to Hunter Biden and not just the laptop.

Specifically, in late July 2022, Senator Grassley wrote to the DOJ and FBI about whistleblower disclosures that, in August 2020, "there was a scheme in place among certain FBI officials to undermine derogatory information connected to Hunter Biden by falsely suggesting it was disinformation."¹⁰ In August 2020, we were provided an unnecessary briefing by the FBI's Foreign Influence Task Force that was designed to undermine our investigation into the Biden family.¹¹ In August 2022, Senator Johnson learned from whistleblowers that after the FBI obtained the Hunter Biden laptop from the Wilmington, DE computer shop, local FBI leadership told employees, "you will not look at that Hunter Biden laptop[.]"¹² These whistleblower allegations, as well as the recently released chat messages, illustrate the FBI's past abuse of power.

⁷ Letter from Ron Johnson, Chairman, Comm. On Homeland Sec. and Governmental Aff. to Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Justice, Oct. 21, 2020.

⁸ Letter from Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Justice to Ron Johnson, United States Senate, Feb. 17, 2021 (emphasis added).

⁹ Post by Catherine Herridge, Apr. 1, 2025, available at https://x.com/C__Herridge/status/1907097122517737598.

¹⁰ Letter from Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary, to Merrick Garland, Attorney General, Dep't of Justice, and Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, July 25, 2022, https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_justice_deptfbipoliticalbiasfollowup.pdf.

¹¹ Editorial: The FBI's Dubious Briefing, *Wall St. J.* (May 4, 2021), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-fbis-dubious-briefing-11620168038>.

¹² Letter from Sen. Ron Johnson, Ranking Member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, to Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Aug. 23, 2022. <https://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/2022/8/sen-johnson-reveals-new-whistleblower-allegations-about-fbi-undermining-hunter-biden-investigation>.

In continuation of our previous oversight work of the FBI's corrupt handling of Hunter Biden's laptop, we request that you provide the following information:

1. All "chat messages" referenced in Catherine Herridge and Michael Shellenberger's report, including but not limited to all messages provided to any office or committee of the U.S. House of Representatives referring or relating to the Hunter Biden laptop.¹³
2. All text messages, instant messages, team chats, and all other "chat messages" referring or relating to the Hunter Biden laptop, sent between and among the following individuals:
 - a. Elvis Chan;
 - b. Laura Dehmlow;
 - c. Bradley Benavides;
 - d. James Dennehy; and
 - e. Any other FBI employee or detailee involved in the receipt, review, or assessment of the Hunter Biden laptop.
3. All FBI records¹⁴ from December 1, 2019 to the present related to Hunter Biden and his electronic devices.

Please provide this information as soon as possible and contact our offices with any questions related to this request.

Sincerely,



Ron Johnson
Chairman
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary

¹³ Post by Catherine Herridge, Apr. 1, 2025, available at https://x.com/C__Herridge/status/1907097122517737598.

¹⁴ For purposes of this request, "records" include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (emails, email attachments, and any other electronically-created or stored information), direct messages, chats, calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether or not they resulted in final documents).

The Honorable Kash Patel

April 9, 2025

Page 4

cc: The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary