

(UNCLASSIFIED when separated from attachment)



August 17, 2026

**VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION**

The Honorable Todd Blanche  
Attorney General  
Department of Justice

The Honorable Kash Patel  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Honorable Jay Clayton  
Director of National Intelligence

Dear Attorney General Blanche, Director Patel and Director Clayton:

For approximately a decade, we've investigated Crossfire Hurricane and have sought possession of a wide array of government records to expose the facts and evidence once hidden from the American public. The more we've investigated the matter, the more information has come to light exposing the political rot that infected that operation from the get-go. Recently, we've obtained possession of a December 2019 email from Tony Riedlinger, then an FBI Section Chief, to FBI Supervisory Special Agent Joe Pientka. That email contains a description as well as an attached document that should be declassified to the fullest extent possible under the law. The records, when read together, appear to corroborate existing public evidence that President Trump was the target of a political hit and the basis of evidence that would lead a person to reasonably make that conclusion appears to have been known to the Justice Department and FBI for some time. And, if it were not known, that knowledge blind spot demands explanation. Accordingly, these two records call into further question the misconduct of then-FBI Director Comey and his staff. We will send the records via a separate classified transmission.

Moreover, we have obtained possession of records relating to Operation Round River, which Chairman Grassley began to investigate in July 2022.<sup>1</sup> To-date, the available records cause serious concerns about how federal law enforcement and the Intelligence Community used its resources to downgrade allegations of criminality relating to the Biden family apparently without sufficient investigation.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Senator Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, to the Honorable Merrick Garland, Attorney General, Department of Justice, and The Honorable Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation (July 25, 2022), [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley\\_to\\_justice\\_deptfbipoliticalbiasfollowup.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_justice_deptfbipoliticalbiasfollowup.pdf); Senator Charles E. Grassley, Grassley Reveals New Details Of FBI Efforts To Tamper With Far-Reaching Biden Family Investigations, News Releases (Oct. 25, 2023), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-reveals-new-details-of-fbi-efforts-to-tamper-with-far-reaching-biden-family-investigations>.

Attorney General Blanche, Director Patel, and Director Clayton  
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The records also cause concern about how federal records were stored and managed. For example, an unclassified sentence in an email from FBI Supervisory Special Agent Michael DeLauro, a member of the now-disbanded Foreign Influence Task Force, said “We apologize for the classification caveats but our OGC has directed us to classify our work this way based on past experience with Crossfire Hurricane.” Thus, it appears that the Wray FBI intentionally misclassified information a certain way which would result in more obstacles to obtaining access, whether it be Congress or the American people who sought it. In addition, some Round River documents include banner markings to identify classified information; however, the banner markings include “Round River” as a classification code. Accordingly, it appears the Wray FBI treated Round River as a Special Access Program when all accounts provided to us so far show no indication that it was in fact such a program. If that’s not the case, please provide clarification.

This finding, coupled with the concerns that Chairman Grassley raised since last year about Prohibited Access and Restricted Access case files obstructing congressional inquiries, raise legitimate questions about whether federal record laws and retention policies were followed.<sup>2</sup> This finding also creates questions with respect to whether the Wray FBI intentionally withheld responsive records from Chairman Grassley’s oversight requests starting in July 2022 because the responsive information was parked away in a hidden classified compartment.

These matters demand accountability and further investigation to fully understand the government’s conduct. In addition to the declassification request with respect to the December 2019 email and attachment, we request that you begin the declassification of Round River records so that one way or the other and irrespective of political judgment the facts and evidence will see the light of day for the American people to make their own decisions on the matters at hand. Declassification should be done because (1) the information that is classified is classified at a level in which declassification has occurred with other records; (2) the information that is classified is similar to the information subject to declassification Executive Orders for Crossfire Hurricane records issued by President Trump in 2020 and 2025; and (3) the overriding public interest.

In your declassification process, we remind you that we expect that the records produced to us will not include improper redactions on unclassified information, to include LES, Privacy Act and related redactions that have thus far been improperly placed on other records this Congress. Redactions on unclassified and classified information frustrate our ability to investigate.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary



Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

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<sup>2</sup> Senator Charles E. Grassley, Newly Declassified FBI Document Proves Fusion GPS Contractor Nellie Ohr Lied to Congress about Contributions to Crossfire Hurricane, News Releases (May 28, 2025), <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/press/rep/releases/newly-declassified-fbi-document-proves-fusion-gps-contractor-nellie-ohr-lied-to-congress-about-contributions-to-crossfire-hurricane>; Senator Charles E. Grassley, Grassley Investigates ‘Prohibited Access’ Files At FBI, Demands Accountability For Document Destruction And Obstruction In Mueller Investigation, News Releases (June 5, 2025), <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-investigates-prohibited-access-files-at-fbi-demands-accountability-for-document-destruction-and-obstruction-in-mueller-investigation>.