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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6276

March 8, 2019

VIA CLASSIFIED COURIER

The Honorable William Barr
Attorney General
Department of Justice

Dear Attorney General Barr,

On February 28, 2018, we transmitted an unclassified cover letter with classified attachments to the Justice Department Inspector General requesting that the office conduct a comprehensive review of potential improper political influence, misconduct, and mismanagement in the conduct of the counterintelligence and criminal investigations related to Russia and individuals associated with the Trump campaign, the presidential transition, and the administration prior to the appointment of Special Counsel Robert Mueller. The referral was based in part on materially inconsistent statements reportedly made by Christopher Steele, the author of the anti-Trump dossier funded by the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign during the 2016 presidential election. The documents we have reviewed also raise questions about the role Bruce Ohr, a senior Justice Department official whose wife worked for Fusion GPS, had in passing allegations from Steele and Fusion GPS to the FBI after the FBI had terminated Mr. Steele as a source.

In addition, on November 16, 2017, the Committee wrote to Special Counsel Mueller regarding the selective use of emails in the George Papadopoulos Statement of Offense.¹ As one example, in the absence of additional context, news outlets have seized on the fragment cited in the Statement's footnote to suggest that a Trump "Campaign official suggested 'low level' staff should go to Russia."² The Trump Campaign voluntarily provided copies of many emails to multiple congressional committees. In full context, the emails in question actually show that the Trump Campaign wanted someone "low level" to decline these types of invitations.³ Another citation was reported by some news outlets as evidence that the campaign, notably Papadopoulos and Sam Clovis, encouraged personnel to meet with the Russians.⁴ However, additional context shows that Papadopoulos had conversations with representatives from multiple governments, not just Russia, and that Clovis had opposed any trip to Russia for Mr. Trump and the campaign.⁵

¹ Statement of the Offense at 8, *U.S. v. George Papadopoulos*, 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. Oct. 5, 2017).

² Jeremy Herb, Evan Perez, Marshall Cohen, Pamela Brown, & Shimon Prokupez, *Ex-Trump campaign adviser pleads guilty to making false statement*, CNN (Oct. 31, 2017, 4:13 AM), <http://www.cnn.com/2017/10/30/politics/paul-manafort-russia-investigation-surrender/index.html>.

³ Rosalind S. Helderman & Tom Hamburger, *Top campaign officials knew of Trump adviser's outreach to Russia*, WASHINGTON POST (Oct. 30, 2017), https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-campaign-adviser-pleaded-guilty-to-lying-about-russian-contacts/2017/10/30/d525e712-bd7d-11e7-97d9-bdab5a0ab381_story.html?utm_term=.24983c6669f0

⁴ Statement of the Offense at 9, *U.S. v. George Papadopoulos*, 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. Oct. 5, 2017). Brianne Pfannenstiel, *Reports: Iowan Sam Clovis encouraged Papadopoulos' Russia meeting*, DES MOINES REGISTER (Oct. 31, 2017, 12:53 PM), <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2017/10/31/sam-clovis-encouraged-papadopoulos-russia-meeting/817054001/>.

⁵ The "campaign supervisor" cited in the Statement has been identified as Sam Clovis. See, e.g., Rosalind S. Helderman & Tom Hamburger, *Top campaign officials knew of Trump adviser's outreach to Russia*, WASHINGTON POST (Oct. 30, 2017).

In light of the fact that you are tasked with overseeing the Russia investigation, it is important that you know and understand the subject matter contained in our unclassified and classified transmissions. Accordingly, attached to this unclassified cover letter is the February 28, 2018, unclassified cover letter and the classified attachments that we originally sent to the Inspector General, the unclassified cover letter and classified Steele referral that we sent to the Department on January 4, 2018, and the November 16, 2017, letter to Special Counsel Mueller. No later than March 22, 2019, please confirm that you have reviewed the aforementioned material.

Should you have questions, please contact Zachary Somers of Chairman Graham's Committee staff at 202-224-5225 and Josh Flynn-Brown of Chairman Grassley's Committee staff at 202-224-4515.

Sincerely,



Lindsey O. Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on Finance

Enclosures:

Classified request and memorandum relating to the Committee's Russia investigation sent to DOJ OIG on February 28, 2018.

Classified Steele criminal referral sent to DOJ on January 4, 2018.
November 16, 2017, letter sent to Robert Mueller.