



Press Releases



House Chairmen Request Documents and Interviews on President Trump's Communications with Putin

Washington, March 4, 2019

Washington, DC – Today, the Chairmen of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, House Foreign Affairs Committee and House Committee on Oversight and Reform wrote to Acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney and Secretary of State Michael Pompeo to request documents from and interviews with personnel of the White House, Executive Office of the President, and Department of State related to communications between President Donald J. Trump and President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation.

Their requests follow up on a February 21, 2019 [letter](#) to the White House in which the Chairmen requested answers to five questions relating to the records maintained surrounding President Trump's communications with Vladimir Putin. The White House failed to provide a response by the due date.

In today's letters, the Chairmen announced that they are examining a number of issues surrounding these communications, including the substance of any communications during in-person encounters and phone calls, the existence and contents of any documents related to the communications, what the effects of the communications have been on the nation's foreign policy, whether the President or anyone acting on his behalf have sought to conceal those communications, and whether the President or anyone acting on his behalf have failed to create records or mishandled those records in violation of federal law.

Chairmen Adam Schiff, Elliot Engel and Elijah Cummings wrote:

According to media reports, President Trump, on multiple occasions, appears to have taken steps to conceal the details of his communications with President Putin from other administration officials, Congress, and the American people. The President reportedly seized notes pertaining to at least one meeting held with President Putin and directed at least one American interpreter not to discuss the substance of communications with President Putin with other federal officials.

On February 21, 2019, we wrote a joint letter to the White House requesting basic information about whether the President in fact destroyed records relating to his conversations with President Putin—in violation of the Presidential Records Act—or if he did not, where those records are currently located. The White House failed to provide any response to our inquiry. As a result, we are now expanding our investigation.

These allegations, if true, raise profound national security, counterintelligence, and foreign policy concerns, especially in light of Russia's ongoing active measures campaign to improperly influence American elections. In addition, such allegations, if true, undermine the proper functioning of government, most notably the Department's access to critical information germane to its diplomatic mission and its ability to develop and execute foreign policy that advances our national interests. Finally, these allegations present serious concerns that materials pertaining to specific communications may have been manipulated or withheld from the official record in direct contravention of federal laws, which expressly require that Presidents and other administration officials preserve such materials.

Congress has a constitutional duty to conduct oversight over the Department and the White House to determine, among other things, the impact of those communications on U.S. foreign policy, whether federal officials, including President Trump, have acted in the national interest, and whether the applicable laws, regulations, and agency procedures with respect to diplomatic communications with President Putin and other foreign leaders have been complied with and remain sufficient.

The letter to the White House is [here](#). The letter to the Department of State is [here](#). Both letters request a fulfillment of the requests by March 15, 2019.

Minority | Privacy Policy

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