

JULY 16, 2018

Feinstein Statement on Butina Charges

Washington—Senate Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today released the following statement on the charges filed against Maria Butina:

“The Justice Department today charged Maria Butina, a Russian national, with acting as an unregistered Russian agent. According to the complaint, Butina used a pro-gun group to connect with American politicians and sought ‘back channel’ communications that could be used by Russia to influence U.S. policy. The complaint further alleges that Butina worked with an unidentified U.S. person and at the direction of a high-level Russian government official.

“Today’s complaint is another development in the ongoing investigation into Russia’s efforts to attack our democracy. As more pieces of Russia’s vast effort to undermine U.S. democracy are revealed, President Trump’s failure to stand up to President Putin and protect our national security looks even worse.

“Judiciary Committee Democrats in December 2017 requested documents and an interview with Maria Butina to determine whether she used the National Rifle Association to establish back channel communications or funnel Russian money to the Trump campaign at the behest of Alexander Torshin, a prominent Russian banker connected to Vladimir Putin. She refused to comply, citing the lack of support from our Republican colleagues.

“Protecting our national security and the integrity of our democracy must be the mission of Republicans and Democrats alike. This complaint should serve as a stark reminder that Russia is not our ally and that we must get to the bottom of exactly what happened during the 2016 election and who was involved.”

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