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Smith Statement on Russia Investigation and the 'Unmasking' Controversy (/press-releases?ID=D68598E3-3076-4786-B485-D2B5A0354EE4)

April 5, 2017

Washington D.C. – *Today, Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) released the following statement about the “unmasking” controversy related to the investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election:*

“This effort to change the subject to ‘masking’ and ‘unmasking’ is all obfuscation. A foreign power intervened in a U.S. election, and there is ample and growing evidence that it did so with at least some collaboration from members of the Trump campaign. No matter what else is happening, this issue must be dealt with directly.

“Donald Trump is the elected President of the United States, and as the President he needs to do is his job. That job requires him to deter the Russians from intervening in American democracy and conducting further influence campaigns.

"Every day, the intelligence community reviews intercepts that may bear on the security of the United States and, as a part of a standard procedure, if a policymaker such as the National Security Advisor requests that a name be unmasked, determines whether national security requires an unmasking. This is legal and appropriate.

"Any implication that former National Security Advisor Susan Rice took actions outside of her job are a distraction from the real issue, Russian interference in the U.S. election. There is no evidence to suggest that she leaked any of this information or inappropriately requested an unmasking; meanwhile, we know that there were other investigations including an ongoing FBI effort covering this issue that could have produced leaks.

"What we do have, however, is concrete evidence of Russia's intervention in our election. It is the central issue here and we should not be distracted."

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