

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 20515-6216
One Hundred Fifteenth Congress

May 11, 2017

Chairman Bob Goodlatte
House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte:

We write today to request that you immediately schedule hearings concerning President Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey. This decision to abruptly fire Mr. Comey not only undermines the Department of Justice's investigation into Russia's efforts to influence the recent U.S. elections in possible coordination with the Trump campaign, but also threatens to erode confidence in the Department as a bedrock of independence and integrity within our system of government.

The dismissal of Director Comey demands a clear and compelling explanation. To date, the Administration has provided none. The stated reasons for Mr. Comey's dismissal seem to be pretextual. Whatever the President's reasons for removing the director, they would not appear to stem from the FBI's handling of the investigation into Secretary Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server. The facts of that case were known to the Administration months ago—when both President Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions praised Director Comey for these very actions. Mr. Trump acknowledged as much today when he admitted during an interview, “I was going to fire him regardless of [Rosenstein's] recommendation.”

There is already evidence the firing is harming the Department and the FBI. The media is reporting that Deputy Director Rosenstein threatened to resign over Mr. Trump's efforts to pin the firing decision on him. Further, while the White House claimed “the rank and file of the FBI had lost confidence in their director,” the reality is far different. Thomas O'Connor, an FBI special agent who is president of the FBI Agents Association stated that Comey's “support within the rank and file of the FBI is overwhelming” adding that his firing “was described to me today by at least three agents as a gut punch to the organization ... neither agents nor the association ‘saw this coming’ and that few thought Comey did anything to deserve such treatment.” Law enforcement's support of Mr. Comey was confirmed today by Acting FBI Director McCabe in his testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee when he stated Mr. Comey “enjoyed broad support in the FBI [prior to the firing], and still does to this day.”

Because it falls to our Committee to ensure the integrity and independence of both the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, we ask that you schedule hearings with the key players in this matter—former Director Comey, Attorney General Sessions, and Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein—as soon as practicable and certainly by no later than May 25, 2017.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

John Lemzyer Jr.

Jenold Madler

Pramila Jussal

Eric Squalone

Zoe Lof

Mark [Signature]

Jaine Rastin

Burley [Signature]

Ted W. Lien

Aed Deutch

Steve Lu

David N. Cicillone

Karen Bass

Mike [Signature]

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Hank Johnson

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Shula Jackson Lee