

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 19, 2018

The Honorable Rod J. Rosenstein
Deputy Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein:

We write regarding the “candidate for the U.S. Congress” referenced in section 43a of the recently issued indictment arising from the Special Counsel investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election. We expect that the Special Counsel is fully investigating all appropriate charges against this individual for requesting stolen, damaging information against the individual’s opponent in the election. Additionally, we ask that when the work of the Special Counsel is concluded, you refer this matter to the Federal Election Commission to determine if the candidate’s request constitutes a solicitation for an in-kind contribution from a foreign national, a violation of campaign finance laws.

Per the indictment, Guccifer 2.0 – the persona used by a group of Russian intelligence officials in their efforts to disrupt the 2016 election – “received a request for stolen documents from a candidate for the U.S. Congress” and in response “sent the candidate stolen documents related to the candidate’s opponent.” At the time of the request, Guccifer 2.0 was not yet proven to be a Russian asset but had identified itself as a Romanian hacker, claimed responsibility for the hacking of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and disseminated documents stolen in that hack. It is implausible that the candidate did not know that he or she was requesting stolen materials from a foreign actor seeking to influence our nation’s democratic process. This breach of the public trust – a candidate for public office colluding with a hostile foreign actor to obtain stolen information and gain advantage in an election – demands thorough investigation.

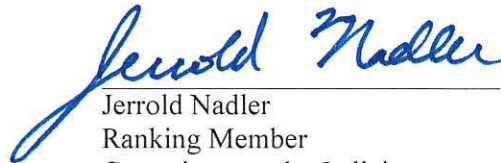
In addition to potential criminal offenses, the candidate’s request appears to violate campaign finance law. 52 U.S.C. § 30121 prohibits the solicitation of a contribution of “money or other thing of value” from a foreign national. Damaging information on a political opponent constitutes a “thing of value.” It is incumbent upon the Department to refer this matter to the FEC for further investigation and application of appropriate civil penalties, and we urge you to do so at the appropriate time.

Prohibitions on election activity by foreign nationals are essential to the very idea of self-government; it is the right of the American people to decide American elections without disruption or interference. We must safeguard this right by fully investigating any attempt to undermine our elections by inviting foreign interference. We appreciate your prompt attention to this crucial matter.

Sincerely,



John P. Sarbanes
Chair
Democracy Reform Task Force



Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform



Robert A. Brady
Ranking Member
Committee on House Administration

cc: The Honorable Bob Goodlatte, Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
The Honorable Gregg Harper, Chairman, Committee on House Administration