
U.S. House Committee on
THE JUDICIARY (1)
CHAIRMAN JERROLD NADLER

AFTER LACKLUSTER RESPONSE FROM DOJ REGARDING SESSIONS' RECUSAL, NADLER, JEFFRIES & LIEU CALL ON DOJ TO RELEASE ALL DOCS RELATED TO SESSIONS' RECUSAL & SUBMIT A SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE

Jan 24, 2018

Washington, D.C. – On March 31, 2017, three Democratic members of the House Committee on the Judiciary wrote to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions (<https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/sites/democrats-judiciary.house.gov/files/documents/Letter%20to%20Sessions%20on%20recusal%203.31.17.pdf>) to ask him about the precise scope of his recusal from any investigation of the Trump campaign, given public comments he had made about the need for “some convictions” to stop “the leakers, in the various agencies.” Nearly a year later, on January 16, 2018, the Committee received a brief response (<https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/sites/democrats-judiciary.house.gov/files/documents/Response%20from%20DOJ%20re%20Sessions%20recusal.pdf>) from the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), joined by Reps. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) and Ted Lieu (D-CA), issued the following joint statement:

“The response from the Department of Justice is completely unacceptable.

“It has been nearly a year since Attorney General Sessions was forced to recuse himself from the investigation into the Trump campaign’s many connections to the Russian government because of his own activities on behalf of the campaign in 2016. Unfortunately, Attorney General Sessions has shown no signs of abiding by the plain terms of that recusal. Over the past year, he has openly participated in matters directly related to the Russia investigation—including, but not limited to, the firing of former FBI Director James Comey, the re-opening of the spurious Uranium One investigation at the behest of President Trump, and the public statements referenced in the letter sent last year. In his appearances before Congress, he has provided conflicting testimony about his communications with Russians during the election.

“We have repeatedly asked the Attorney General to explain his actions to Congress and tell us why he thinks his recusal permits these actions. He has repeatedly refused to do so. This response is just another example of the disregard of the Administration to comply with any oversight by Congress whatsoever. We expect the Attorney General to retract this form letter and provide us with a direct and substantive response without delay, just as we expect the Department of Justice to release any and all documents that may relate to the scope and application of Sessions’ recusal.”

On June 29, 2017, all Democrats on the House Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Judiciary, sent a letter (<https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/news/press-releases/oversight-judiciary-dems-ask-doj-inspector-general-investigate-whether-attorney>) to the Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz requesting an investigation into whether Attorney General Jeff Sessions violated his recusal when he participated in President Trump’s decision to fire FBI Director James Comey.

On July 26, 2017, House Judiciary Republicans shut down a resolution of inquiry (<https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/news/press-releases/judiciary-republicans-hijack-markup-sessions-recusal-and-comey-firing-resolution>) which sought information from the White House and the Department of Justice related to the recusal of Attorney General Jeff Sessions, the removal of former FBI Director James Comey, and any recordings the White House may have made of conversations between Director Comey and President Trump. Rather than debate the underlying resolution, Judiciary Republicans adopted an amendment offered by Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL) - that completely struck the content of the bill and substituted a request for information on a wide range of right-wing conspiracy theories about Cheryl Mills and Hillary Clinton sourced from a pro-Trump Reddit thread.

Read the March 31, 2017 letter to request information on Sessions' recusal here (<https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/news/press-releases/conyers-jeffries-lieu-ag-sessions-are-you-recused-russia-matters-or-are-you>).

Read the January 16, 2018 response letter from DOJ here (<https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/sites/democrats.judiciary.house.gov/files/documents/Response%20from%20DOJ%20re%20Sessions%20recusal.pdf>).

115th Congress