

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 27, 2018

John Bolton
National Security Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Bolton:

As the National Security Council (NSC) meets today to discuss the critically important issue of election security, we write to strongly urge the NSC to consider three primary issues: holding the Russian government accountable for attacking our elections, improving interagency coordination to secure our elections, and supporting state and local election officials. With roughly 100 days left until the midterm elections, we are pleased to see an NSC meeting on election security. While the meeting is an important first step, it is long overdue.

Intelligence officials have repeatedly confirmed that the Russian government and other foreign adversaries are continuing their efforts to attack our election systems and undermine our democracy. And this conclusion is not just the assessment of intelligence officers and national security officials. Private industry is also raising the alarm. Just last week, Microsoft revealed that the company has already detected phishing attacks against three primary campaigns. This is more than meddling or interference. It is a full-fledged cyberattack waged against the U.S. government and should be addressed as such.

Therefore, we ask that the NSC meeting prioritize the following:

First, the United States must hold Russia accountable for its attack on the 2016 elections and its continued interference in our democracy. There is no question that the Administration should fully implement the sanctions authorized by Congress, but these sanctions are only one part of a comprehensive strategy to address Russia's actions. The Administration should also work to ensure that the 12 Russian government officials indicted by Special Counsel Mueller are extradited to the United States and commit to protecting our diplomats and other U.S. personnel – past and present.

Second, our intelligence services must share relevant threat information with the appropriate agencies so they can respond effectively to cyber threats and intrusions into our election systems. The National Security Council should work with law-enforcement, homeland security, intelligence, diplomatic and defense officials to develop a long-term strategy to address election interference, including cyberattacks on U.S. election infrastructure. With such limited time before Election Day, we ask that Congress be made aware of all future Principals and Deputies Committee meetings on this topic to ensure the timely development of a strategy to address this threat.

Finally, the government should commit to providing state and local election officials on the frontlines with the tools they need to protect our elections. It took the Department of Homeland Security nearly a year to inform the 21 states that were targeted by Russia in 2016. As new cyber threats emerge, federal officials must have a plan in place to immediately inform state and local election officials and provide them with the appropriate cybersecurity resources necessary to combat those threats.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



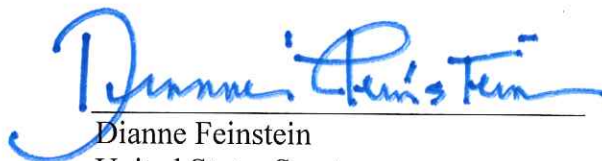
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Dianne Feinstein
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