



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2018

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Ranking Member Thompson,

Thank you for your March 16th letter regarding Russian interference in our electoral process. Foreign meddling in our elections by any adversary is completely unacceptable and must never be tolerated. Protecting the integrity of our democratic institutions must be a bipartisan goal of our Committee.

As Chairman, strengthening the cybersecurity role of the Department of Homeland Security has been a top priority of mine. With House passage of the landmark DHS reauthorization bill and *CISA*, both with overwhelming bipartisan support, we have shown steadfast leadership on this issue. I continue to remain grateful for your efforts on these key legislative accomplishments.

As I stated very clearly in my letter to you on February 21st, we fully plan to have the new Under Secretary of the National Protection and Programs Directorate appear before our Committee to discuss this and other related issues, once he is confirmed. We will also have Secretary Nielsen appear before our Committee on April 26th. I fully encourage all members to raise this issue when she appears.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to protect our homeland from the many threats we face.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael T. McCaul".

MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman

Enclosed:

February 21, 2018, Letter to Ranking Member Thompson re: Election Security
March 14, 2018, Letter to Ranking Member Thompson re: Election Security



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
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February 21, 2018

Ranking Member Bennie Thompson
Committee on Homeland Security
H2-117 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Thompson,

Thank you for your February 16, 2018 letter. Russian interference in our electoral process and the undermining of our democratic institutions by a foreign adversary must never be tolerated. That is why I am proud of our bipartisan efforts to pass the first ever, comprehensive reauthorization of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Specifically, I am glad we adopted an amendment that prioritizes and requires DHS to provide voluntary assistance to state and local election officials in recognition of the importance of election infrastructure. Not only did we pass this bill unanimously through our Committee, it passed through the House with overwhelming bipartisan support last July by a vote of 386-41.

It is imperative that we continue to ensure DHS has the most efficient and robust structure possible to help thwart all cyber adversaries. The bipartisan *Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Act of 2017*, which I introduced and you co-sponsored, elevates and operationalizes the Department's cybersecurity and infrastructure protection offices, helping to ensure stronger mission execution which is so integral to our shared concerns. This bill also sailed through the House with support from both parties. The Senate should follow our lead and get these bills to the President's desk.

While recognizing Russian interference in our election in October of 2016, I called on President Obama to "send a clear signal to Moscow: attempts to influence U.S. elections or interfere with our democratic system will be met with severe consequences." Since that time, I have remained consistent on the seriousness of this threat. Just last week, I called for the extradition of Russians who had been indicted for election interference, so they could be "held accountable and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law." Clearly, these kinds of attacks transcend partisan politics.

I want to encourage all Members of the Committee to raise this vital issue when Secretary Nielsen appears before the Committee during our March budget hearing. In addition, it is my goal to have the Under Secretary of the National Protection and Programs Directorate, once

confirmed, appear before the Committee to discuss this, and other key cyber issues, in classified and unclassified settings.

I look forward to working with you to protect the integrity and transparency of our American democracy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael T. McCaul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515
March 14, 2018

Ranking Member Bennie Thompson
House Committee on Homeland Security
H2-117 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Thompson,

Thank you for your letter regarding our dialogue on March 7th concerning election security and school security. This Committee has always worked together in a bipartisan fashion and successfully we pushed forward several important homeland security initiatives. I have been disturbed about Russian meddling in our elections for a long time and share your concerns about future vulnerabilities. This is why I began sounding the alarm on this issue prior to the 2016 election as well as post-election in my numerous public statements. Additionally, we have had staff and Member briefs and held a number of hearings in 2016 and 2017 where questions and/or statements about Russian interference have been presented by our Members to expert witnesses. As you know, last week I sent a letter to Secretary Nielsen to request additional information about our current efforts at the Department of Homeland Security and how they are working with our State and local election officials. And as I stated last week when the Undersecretary of NPPD is confirmed I plan to hold a hearing on this vital topic.

As the father of five children I am deeply concerned about the safety of our schools and the epidemic of mass school shootings by these mentally ill perpetrators. As in the most recent case in Parkland, there was a trail of red flags that the FBI and local law enforcement did not adequately follow up which possibly could have prevented this massacre had they intervened. This is why I am proud cosponsor of the Stop School Violence Act that invests in early intervention and prevention programs among others that intake and triage threats before tragedy strikes. I am pleased we will be voting on this measure this week. DHS continues outreach and training to schools and school districts to help put into place critical programs that can help harden soft targets and assist schools to create emergency plans that can save lives. In the coming week, the Committee is planning on holding a Member briefing that will help inform us of these ongoing efforts. I am hopeful these activities can help us find a bipartisan way forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael McCaul".

MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman