



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

September 2, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Wolf:

We write to express our serious concern about the apparent politicization of the Office of Intelligence & Analysis (I&A) with regard to its responsibility to produce and disseminate impartial intelligence and law enforcement products.

A recent report from *ABC News* suggests that, in early July, the DHS Chief of Staff may have inappropriately withheld an I&A intelligence bulletin warning law enforcement partners—with “high confidence”—of Russian attempts to influence the 2020 election by denigrating former Vice President Joe Biden’s mental health.¹ In addition, the report provides email screenshots indicating that this I&A product was sent to the DHS Office of Legislative Affairs and Office of Public Affairs for review prior to dissemination.

This is the latest in a series of actions that politically appointed Department leaders have taken to politicize the operations of the Department and skew the intelligence analysis that so many law enforcement officers across the country count on to keep Americans safe. It also runs counter to the mission and integrity of any intelligence organization to have its products edited or held up for review by political advisers.

The report leaves us with a number of critical questions and concerns. Please produce to the Committee by September 16, 2020, the following:

- Any documents or communications related to why the draft product titled “Russia Likely to Denigrate Health of US Candidates to Influence 2020 Election” did not meet publication standards;
- Any intelligence products cited in the draft product;
- An account of products that were edited or withheld from publication and dissemination by the Office of the Secretary, the Chief of Staff, the Office of Legislative Affairs or the Office of Public Affairs;
- Any policies in force on or after July 7, 2020 that outline the process for the Office of Legislative Affairs or Office Public Affairs to review draft intelligence products prior to their release;
- Any documents or communication regarding the office of Chief of Staff or Office of the Secretary’s ability to review intelligence products prior to their release;

¹ Josh Margolin, Lucien Bruggeman, Will Steakin, and Jonathan Karl, *DHS Withheld July Intelligence Bulletin Calling Out Russian Attack on Biden’s Mental Health*, ABC NEWS, Sept. 2, 2020, <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/dhs-withheld-july-intelligence-bulletin-calling-russian-attack/story?id=72747130>.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman



Max Rose
Chairman
Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism