Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 9, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

January 6th marked one year since the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released its ominous report documenting Russia's multifaceted campaign to interfere in the 2016 elections and warning that Russia is likely to do it again.

Over the past year, our nation has learned more about the breadth and magnitude of Russia's growing threat against our democracy and our national security. We now know that Russia used its influence to help elect Donald Trump, sought to interfere in at least 21 state elections, executed a propaganda campaign to manipulate and sow discord among the American people, and hacked our nation's critical infrastructure, including U.S. electricity grids.

Since then, President Trump's former National Security Adviser, Michael Flynn, and the President's former campaign policy adviser, George Papadopoulos, both have pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about their contacts with Russia. President Trump also fired James Comey, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, because he continued to investigate the "Russia thing" while refusing to pledge his loyalty to President Trump.

Russia's aggression towards the United States and the Trump Administration's efforts to cover up its communications with the Russians demand an immediate, whole-of-government response. Yet, Republican House leaders and Committee Chairmen have blocked, stonewalled, and rejected our basic requests to investigate, hold public hearings, and advance legislation to address these matters. House Republicans have chosen to put President Trump ahead of our national interests.

Rather than pursue the truth on behalf of the American people, House Republicans have waged an aggressive campaign to shut down congressional and criminal investigations into Russia's attack, they have launched and re-launched investigations into baseless conspiracy theories to deflect attention and resources, they have defamed our nation's top law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and they have sought to discredit anyone seeking to uncover wrongdoing, including Special Counsel Robert Mueller, a decorated war veteran.

To date, the House has held only one full committee public hearing on the most significant finding of the ODNI report: that our elections continue to be vulnerable to foreign interference in the future. Instead, they have relegated this issue to a handful of toothless subcommittee hearings, which have been marked by the Trump Administration's refusal to provide documents requested by Democrats that would help inform our work, such as documents

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relating to Russia's attempted attacks against 21 state election systems that are currently being withheld by the Department of Homeland Security. Our country, our democracy, and the American public deserve better.

As Members of Congress, we take a solemn oath to support and defend the Constitution and protect the American people. The failure of House Republicans to take strong and swift action in the face of Russia's assault on our democracy is beneath the dignity of this oath. The strength and integrity of our democracy, the rule of law, and our democratic institutions hang in the balance.

We ask you to change course and begin demonstrating true leadership on this critical national security issue. We request that House Republicans join us in fulfilling our sworn constitutional duty by ensuring that each committee of jurisdiction thoroughly investigates the following key questions:

- How were Russian hackers able to penetrate our state election systems, and how do we protect our elections infrastructure in advance of upcoming elections this year and beyond?

- What vulnerabilities remain in our electrical grids and infrastructure networks, and what can we be doing to ensure our safety and security?

- How was social media leveraged to influence voters, and what can be done to ensure that American voters know where their information is coming from?

- What was the extent of the Trump campaign's involvement in Russia's operation to hack and disseminate material damaging to Hillary Clinton?

- In light of President Trump's refusal to release his tax returns, what is the extent of his and his family's business and financial ties to Russians, and how might those ties constitute leverage over the President and his family?

- In light of Attorney General Jeff Sessions' testimony in October that the Trump Administration is not doing enough to stop future Russian interference and that "the matter is so complex that for most of us we are not able to fully grasp the technical dangers that are out there," what steps has the Trump Administration taken to hold Russia accountable for its attack and ensure the safety of our elections from foreign interference?

- Why is the Trump Administration dragging its feet on implementing the sanctions against Russia that were adopted by Congress with widespread bipartisan support?

- What are the extent and nature of efforts by the Trump Administration to impede criminal and congressional investigations into the Trump campaign's involvement and support for Russian interference into our elections?

We are extremely concerned by the Intelligence Community's warning that Russia may attempt to interfere with future elections—including the upcoming midterm elections—and we are deeply troubled by the lack of action by the Trump Administration and House Republicans in responding to this core threat to our democracy.

We ask you to review this request and to schedule a meeting with leaders of both parties so we may work together to respond to the matters of serious concern raised in this letter. Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Congressman Eliot Engel,
Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee

Congresswoman Maxine Waters,
Ranking Member of the Financial Services Committee

Congressman Jerrold Nadler,
Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee

Congressman Bennie Thompson,
Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Committee

Congressman Elijah Cummings,
Ranking Member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee

Congressman Robert Brady,
Ranking Member of the House Administration Committee