

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

May 31, 2023

The Honorable Avril Haines  
Director  
Office of the Director of National Intelligence  
1500 Tysons McLean Boulevard  
McLean, VA 22102

Dear Director Haines:

Less than four weeks prior to the 2020 Election Day, the *New York Post* published an article detailing how Hunter Biden used his relationship and influence with his father for personal financial gain.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the *New York Post* detailed how Hunter Biden allegedly introduced then-Vice President Biden to a top executive at a Ukrainian energy firm based on emails found on an abandoned laptop previously belonging to Hunter Biden. Five days later, 51 former senior intelligence officials released a statement concluding that the *New York Post* article had “all the classic earmarks” of Russian disinformation.<sup>2</sup> We are deeply concerned these former senior members of the U.S. Intelligence Community misused their titles and connections to pursue a coordinated, partisan effort to protect President Biden during the 2020 election.

We now know this letter was part of a deliberate effort to protect the Biden campaign in the waning days of the election.<sup>3</sup> These 51 former intelligence officials highlighted their former titles and previous experience in the Intelligence Community to bolster the credibility of the statement and further the effectiveness of this partisan political operation. The October 19, 2020, letter began: “We are all individuals who devoted significant portions of our lives to national security. Some of us served in senior positions in policy departments and agencies, and some of us served in senior positions in the Intelligence Community.”<sup>4</sup>

Former intelligence officials have flexibility in post-employment opportunities and maintain First Amendment protections afforded to all Americans on expressing political views. We believe, however, that this partisan effort crossed the line of politicizing the Intelligence Community as a whole as these former officials abused their influence within the Intelligence Community to achieve a partisan political outcome. Politicization of intelligence is wrong, dangerous, and threatens the public’s faith in institutions that should never be used to attempt to influence the democratic process.

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<sup>1</sup> Emma-Jo Morris and Gabrielle Fonrouge, *Smoking-gun email reveals how Hunter Biden introduced Ukrainian businessman to VP dad*, N.Y. POST (Oct. 14, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Natasha Bertrand, *Hunter Biden story is Russian disinfo, dozens of former intel officials say*, POLITICO (Oct. 19, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. H. R. Comm. on the Judiciary, Select Subcomm. on the Weaponization of the Federal Government, and Permanent Select Comm. on Intelligence Staff Report, THE HUNTER BIDEN STATEMENT: HOW SENIOR INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY OFFICIALS AND THE BIDEN CAMPAIGN WORKED TO MISLEAD AMERICAN VOTERS (May 10, 2023).

<sup>4</sup> Natasha Bertrand, *Hunter Biden story is Russian disinfo, dozens of former intel officials say*, POLITICO (Oct. 19, 2020).

It is especially concerning that former Acting Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Michael Morell requested that the CIA's Prepublication Classification Review Board (PCRB) fast track this calculated effort to protect the Biden campaign. It is also inexcusable that a CIA employee, then assigned to the PCRB, may have solicited additional signatures from former Intelligence Community officials.

To better understand any connections these 51 signatories, as detailed in Appendix A, had to the Intelligence Community both at the time their public statement was released and today, please provide the following information by June 14, 2023.

1. How many of the Appendix A individuals maintained an active security clearance at any point between October 1, 2020, and October 31, 2020?
2. How many of the Appendix A individuals currently possess a security clearance?
3. How many of the Appendix A individuals-maintained business arrangements, contracts, or other consulting arrangements with any element of the U.S. Intelligence Community between October 1, 2020, to October 31, 2020?
4. How many of the Appendix A individuals currently maintain business arrangements, contracts, or other consulting arrangements with any element of the U.S. Intelligence Community?
5. Has the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) or the CIA conducted a review of former CIA Acting Director Mike Morrell's abuse of the CIA's PCRB process?
6. Has ODNI or the CIA conducted an investigation into whether others employed by the Intelligence Community in October 2020, participated or aided in the creation of the public statement?

All of us in positions of public trust with access to classified information owe it to the American people not to abuse our positions for political purposes. We look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



James E. Risch  
U.S. Senator



Tom Cotton  
U.S. Senator



John Cornyn  
U.S. Senator



Jerry Moran  
U.S. Senator



James Lankford  
U.S. Senator

CC: The Honorable William Burns, Director, Central Intelligence Agency