

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0552
May 17, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
1233 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Paul,

I write to you today not as a Democrat, but as a peer and as an American. Recent events and revelations have made clear the need for impartiality as we struggle to unearth the facts surrounding Russia's assault on our democracy and on our institutions. The safety, security, and integrity of our nation is our most sacred responsibility and we are now being called to exercise our power to restore trust in our government.

The facts we have been presented with are cause enough for each one of us to demand a thorough, impartial, independent investigation into Russia's attempts to influence our elections and its attempts to exert influence and control over decision making in the White House. In the midst of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's investigation into the connections between the President, his organization, his surrogates, and Russia, the President's National Security Advisor resigned, the Attorney General of the United States recused himself, and the F.B.I Director was fired by the President of the United States because, at least in part, Director Comey was committed to completing the investigation. Most recently, there are public allegations that the President, prior to making the decision to relieve him of his post, said to Comey, "I hope you can let this go." Given the apparent connections between individuals within the Administration and Russia, and the President's own reticence toward the FBI's pursuit of answers, it should be clear to all of us that the establishment of an independent commission to carry out this investigation has never been more critical.

Supporting an independent commission at this time goes beyond politics. At minimum, the establishment of an independent commission that is free of influence by the President and his surrogates will help restore public trust and Congressional confidence in the investigation. The legitimacy of this investigation—whatever the outcome—depends entirely on the impartiality of its investigators. For that reason, I urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 356, the Protecting our Democracy Act, and to sign the discharge petition to bring this bill up for an immediate vote by the House.

History is judging each and every one of us on our faithful execution of the oath we took to support and defend the Constitution. We are compelled to uphold Congress' role as a co-equal branch of government and a check on the power and a source of accountability of the executive. Now is the time for courage. We must stand shoulder to shoulder, put aside considerations of party politics, and get the answers that all of us, as Americans, deserve.

Sincerely,



Scott Peters
Member of Congress