

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 22, 2020

The Honorable John Ratcliffe
Director
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
Washington, DC 20511

The Honorable William P. Barr
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Director Ratcliffe, Attorney General Barr, and Director Wray:

As Members of Congress from Florida, former national security professionals, sponsors of H.R. 3529, the *Achieving Lasting Electoral Reforms on Transparency and Security (ALERTS) Act*, and requestors of the May 2019 briefing for the Florida congressional delegation regarding foreign interference in the 2016 election, we write to respectfully ask that you provide a classified briefing for our delegation on the nature and extent of Iranian and Russian efforts to undermine the 2020 election in our state.

This request is a response to the announcement made yesterday by your offices, in which you indicated that Iran and Russia have sought and obtained American voter registration data. It is also a response to public reporting that Iran has sent threatening, faked emails to Florida voters in Alachua County, Brevard County, and Flagler County. We understand the U.S. intelligence community believes foreign adversaries will take additional steps in the coming days to interfere in the election.

It is well-established that a favored tactic of autocratic governments is to use cyber-tools to chisel away at the foundation of a democracy, the free and fair election. It is also clear that Florida is a target of these efforts. Florida's election infrastructure was specifically—and successfully—targeted by Russia in connection with the 2016 election. However, the Florida congressional delegation, along with the general public, was not made aware of this fact until the May 2019 release of the “Report on the Investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election,” known as the Mueller Report.

Upon release of that report, the two of us sent a letter seeking a classified briefing, which our delegation received shortly thereafter. During that briefing, we learned that the election infrastructure in at least two Florida counties had been breached. We were told the county names, but were prohibited from revealing them to the voting public. To this day, the federal government has not publicly released the identity of those counties.

As a result of this sequence of events, we introduced the bipartisan *ALERTS Act* to ensure that Congress and the voting public would be notified in the event that a foreign adversary interfered in a future U.S. election, in a manner consistent with the protection of intelligence sources and methods. We were gratified that Congress subsequently enacted P.L. 116-92, which requires the intelligence community to brief congressional leaders and certain committees when it has moderate or high confidence a foreign adversary is interfering in a U.S. election.

Consistent with the principle embodied in P.L. 116-192, and cognizant of Florida's status as a likely target of foreign-directed election interference, we request a classified briefing for our delegation regarding Iranian and Russian efforts to undermine the 2020 election in Florida, with that briefing to be held no later than October 30, 2020.

In closing, we thank you for the public briefing you held yesterday, notifying the American people of Iranian and Russian efforts to undermine the 2020 election. We have long argued that our government should err on the side of telling citizens more, not less, when foreign powers interfere with our democracy. Our citizens can then counter the threat by scrutinizing the information they view online, checking their voter registration data to confirm it wasn't tampered with, and holding accountable state and local officials who fail to protect election infrastructure. We want to reiterate our view that continued cooperation between federal, state, and local officials to protect our election infrastructure is essential. We believe such cooperation has already resulted in significant improvements.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Michael Waltz
Member of Congress



Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress