

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 13, 2019

Honorable Mike Crapo
Chairman
Senate Banking Committee
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Sherrod Brown
Ranking Member
Senate Banking Committee
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Crapo and Ranking Member Brown:

Thank you for holding a series of hearings last year on Russian sanctions, which included a discussion of legislation that we introduced to deter future foreign interference in U.S. elections. We also appreciate your willingness to work with us to amend our legislation to address specific concerns from the Administration and others. Since those hearings, we have heard repeated concerns from government officials and non-governmental experts that our democratic institutions are still at risk. We therefore respectfully request that the Committee conduct an executive session and mark up of S.1060, the Defending Elections from Threats by Establishing Redlines (DETER) Act, as soon as possible.

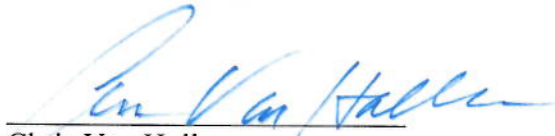
Last year, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell tasked the Senate Banking Committee and Foreign Relations Committee with "holding hearings on the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, and [recommending] to the Senate additional measures that could respond to or deter Russian malign behavior." That mandate resulted in the Banking Committee holding two hearings and discussing the merits of the DETER Act. At those hearings, we learned that the U.S. Government has not done enough to deter Russian efforts to interfere in American elections. Testimony further supported the argument that if we are going to deter Russia from future meddling, the U.S. Government needs to outline clear and significant consequences that are subject to little interpretation.

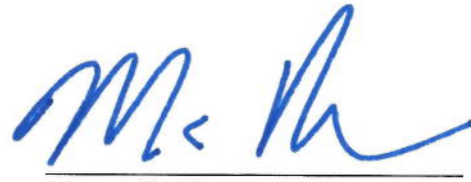
The recent release of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report highlights how the Russian government under Vladimir Putin engaged in a complex effort to interfere in the 2016 elections. Moreover, senior U.S. officials reported that the Kremlin tried to hack the 2018 midterm elections and will seek to undermine the 2020 presidential election.

We know you share our goals of preventing foreign adversaries from meddling in our elections. With less than two years until the next general election and less than a year from the start of the state primary elections, Congress still has time to enact meaningful legislation that will deter foreign interference in future elections. We look forward to working with you and the other members of the Banking Committee to advance legislation that will impose a real cost on any foreign attempts to undermine our democracy, and we urge you to hold an executive session and markup of the DETER Act at the earliest possible convenience.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator


Marco Rubio
United States Senator