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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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October 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Inspector General Horowitz:

On September 24, 2020, the day after Chairman Grassley and I released the majority staff report titled, "Hunter Biden, Burisma, and Corruption: The Impact on U.S. Government Policy and Related Concerns," a whistleblower contacted the committee and informed staff that he had possession of a laptop left in his business by Hunter Biden. He also informed us that he provided its contents to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in response to a December 9, 2019 grand jury subpoena. As the first step in our due diligence, committee staff contacted FBI officials and asked for confirmation of certain facts in an attempt to validate the whistleblower's claims and assertions. Unfortunately, several days later, the FBI responded that it would not confirm or deny any information identified by committee staff even though several of the questions were not related to the possible existence of an ongoing grand jury investigation.

On October 17, 2020, I asked the FBI a number of questions regarding their handling of the laptop. Unfortunately, the FBI still has not provided satisfactory answers even though press reports indicate that the FBI does possess the laptop allegedly belonging to Hunter Biden.¹ The public has a right to know whether the FBI has taken steps to authenticate and, if appropriate, investigate any of the material on the laptop. DNI Ratcliffe has already confirmed that the laptop and its contents were "not part of some Russian disinformation campaign."²

In your report on the FBI's Midyear Exam investigation, your office reviewed an instance in which the FBI failed to act in a timely manner on relevant evidence, specifically the "failure of the FBI to take earlier action on the [Anthony] Weiner laptop."³ Because the FBI has not provided the committee with any information about what steps, if anything, it has taken regarding the laptop, and given the length of time the FBI has reportedly possessed this laptop (more than 10 months), the committee cannot be assured that all appropriate steps have been

¹ Jack Durschlag, FBI holding laptop allegedly containing Hunter Biden business emails: officials, Fox News, Oct. 21, 2020, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/fbi-holding-laptop-allegedly-containing-hunter-biden-business-emails-officials>.

² *Id.*

³ U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GEN., A REVIEW OF VARIOUS ACTIONS BY THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IN ADVANCE OF THE 2016 ELECTION 324 (2018).

taken and procedures have been followed. The American people expect the FBI to learn from its previous failures that your office identified and to fairly investigate potentially criminal matters concerning any U.S. citizen regardless of their last name. But, because the FBI has not provided substantive responses to my inquiries, the American people cannot be assured of those facts.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that your office open an investigation into the FBI's handling of the laptop allegedly belonging to Hunter Biden. Thank you in advance for your assistance on this matter. Should you have any questions about this request please contact Brian Downey or Scott Wittmann of my Committee staff at (202) 224-4571.

Sincerely,



Ron Johnson
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Gary Peters
Ranking Member

The Honorable William P. Barr
Attorney General

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director