

**U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Full  
Committee Hearing**

**December 3, 2020**

**Senator Gary C. Peters, Ranking Member**

***Opening Statement As Prepared for Delivery***

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the bipartisan work that we have accomplished together this Congress.

Under our leadership, this Committee has advanced important legislation to strengthen border security, safeguard critical facilities and institutions from terrorist attacks, streamline government efficiency and save taxpayer dollars, and ensure strong oversight of Coronavirus emergency spending.

This Committee does its best work for the American people when we come together and focus on areas where we can agree.

I regret that today's hearing does not meet our best traditions of nonpartisanship and bipartisanship.

This Committee already held a hearing on oversight of the Crossfire Hurricane investigation. We heard testimony from Department of Justice Inspector General Horowitz about the errors and misconduct his nonpartisan, independent investigation found.

Inspector General Horowitz interviewed more than one hundred witnesses and reviewed more than one million documents over the course of nearly two years to come to his conclusions. I ask that the executive summary of his report be entered into the record.

I'll remind the Chairman that Mr. Horowitz found that "opening the investigation was in compliance with Department and FBI policies," and found "no evidence of political bias in its opening or in any investigative step taken by the Crossfire Hurricane team."

We know the Inspector General did find problems with this investigation, and the FBI has already implemented the recommended changes to prevent these errors from happening again.

In addition to our own Committee's hearing, the Senate Judiciary Committee – which has jurisdiction over the FBI and DOJ – is currently undertaking its own investigation. Prosecutor John Durham is also continuing his own investigation at the Department of Justice.

The Senate Intelligence Committee has also already investigated, and its bipartisan report concluded that Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort's willingness to share information with

the Russian intelligence services was a grave counterintelligence threat. I ask that the findings of the Senate Intelligence Committee be entered into the record.

Today's hearing seeks to rehash the same matter – in a more partisan way – to reach conclusions that the Chairman has already announced publicly. The panelists here today were not witnesses to the underlying events. Their public commentary has been extremely partisan and in some cases – such as disputing the result of the most recent election – entirely divorced from reality.

The strength of American democracy and a peaceful transition of power depends largely on the American people's trust that our elections are free and fair.

There was no plot against President Trump when he won the election four years ago or when he lost the election last month. Promoting a demonstrably false narrative with dangerous rhetoric erodes trust and prevents our country from healing.

Our Committee has a real responsibility to conduct oversight of the federal government's role in pandemic response and so many other matters impacting national security. Given the dangerous world we live in, we simply don't have time to indulge in hyper partisan investigations that don't advance the interests of the American people.

Therefore, I do not think today's hearing is an appropriate use of our Committee's time, resources or credibility.

Next year, I look forward to returning to our strengths: working together in a bipartisan way to address the devastating security, public health and economic challenges facing our nation right now.