

Statement for the Record
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Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism
“Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election”
May 8, 2017

Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Whitehouse and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to appear before you this afternoon on this critically important topic of Russian interference in last year’s presidential election and related matters the Subcommittee is investigating.

For twenty seven years, I was honored to represent the people of the United States with the Justice Department. I began as an Assistant United States Attorney in Atlanta in the fall of 1989. Like all line prosecutors, I investigated and tried cases, working to ensure that our communities were safe and that those who violated the law were held accountable. Over time, through five Democratic and Republican administrations, I assumed greater leadership positions within the Department of Justice. In the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Atlanta, I served as Chief of the Fraud and Public Corruption section, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, and U.S. Attorney. I then had the privilege of serving as Deputy Attorney General, overseeing the daily operations of the Justice Department for over two years, and finally as Acting Attorney General after being asked to stay on by the current administration. Throughout my time at the Department, I was incredibly fortunate to work alongside the career men and women who followed the facts and applied the law with tremendous care and dedication, and who are in fact the backbone of the Department of Justice. And at every step, in every position from AUSA to Acting Attorney General, I have always tried to carry out my responsibility to seek justice in a manner that would engender the trust of the people whom I served.

I want to thank this Subcommittee for conducting an impartial and thorough investigation of this vitally important topic. The efforts by a foreign adversary to interfere with and undermine our democratic processes—and those of our allies—pose a serious threat to all Americans. This hearing and others the Subcommittee has and will convene are an important bipartisan step in understanding the threat and the best ways to confront it going forward. As the intelligence community assessed in its January 2017 report, Russia “will continue to develop capabilities . . . to use against the United States,” and we need to be ready to meet those threats. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to take part in today’s discussion.

I also want to note that I intend my answers today to be as fulsome and comprehensive as possible while respecting my legal and ethical boundaries. As the

Subcommittee understands, many of the topics of interest today concern classified information that I cannot address in this public setting, either directly or indirectly. My duty to protect classified information applies just as much to me as a former official as it did when I led the Department. In addition, I'm no longer at the Department of Justice, and I'm not authorized generally to discuss deliberations within DOJ or more broadly in the Executive Branch, particularly on matters that may be the subject of ongoing investigations. I take those obligations very seriously, and I appreciate the Subcommittee's shared interest in protecting classified information and preserving the integrity of any investigations the Department of Justice may now be pursuing. I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.