

# United States Senate

February 16, 2018

The Honorable Christopher Wray  
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Federal Bureau of Investigation Headquarters  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Director Wray:

I write to follow up on a letter dated March 30, 2017 to your predecessor, former Director James Comey. I am concerned that security clearance investigations of White House personnel by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are being used as cover for a flawed adjudication process within the White House. This is a critical national security matter and a response from the FBI is now necessary.

As you are aware, there are four major components to the personnel security clearance process; 1) pre-investigation (including the submission of Standard Form SF-86), 2) investigation, 3) adjudication, and 4) reinvestigation as needed. While the FBI's Special Inquiries unit is charged with the investigation and reinvestigation for White House officials, the White House Office of Administration's Personnel Security Division determines whether an employee is eligible for a security clearance.

Because the final adjudication of White House security clearances is the responsibility of the White House Personnel Security Division, the FBI's role is critical to the decision-making process. The White House depends on the FBI to provide it with timely and high-quality information about its employees so that it can determine whether that employee can be trusted to handle our nation's most valuable information without fear of blackmail, coercion, or extortion. This is particularly important for individuals in the White House who are responsible for providing sensitive documents to the President of the United States.

Nearly a year after my letter expressing concerns about the security clearance process at the White House, reports indicate that dozens of White House personnel still retain interim security clearances. If the White House Personnel Security Division is adjudicating security clearances based on flawed or incomplete information from the FBI, that is of great concern. Alternatively, if White House personnel are not submitting SF-86 forms for pre-investigation, or if interim clearances are being used by the White House as a way around final adjudication, it represents a significant corruption of the security clearance process and poses a serious national security risk.

Therefore, I request the following information, along with any supporting documentation:

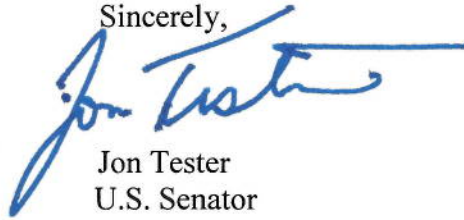
1. Please describe the FBI's policies and procedures used to conduct background investigations for security clearances of White House personnel, including the specific FBI and White House offices and personnel involved.
2. Please provide any written guidance you have received from the White House Personnel Security Office on the handling of White House staff investigations.
3. Which personnel positions within the White House receive either prioritized or expedited security clearance background investigations? Which personnel positions within the White House require the FBI to conduct Single Scope Background Investigations?
4. Does the FBI have a process in place to "immediately" notify the White House of serious issues (criminal conduct, domestic violence, financial irresponsibility, etc.) they uncover during the course of the investigation or does the FBI wait until the investigation is closed?
5. During the current administration, how long has the FBI typically taken to conduct partial or completed investigations of White House personnel for purposes of their security clearance adjudications? How does this length of time compare to previous administrations?
6. During the current administration, how many times has the White House requested follow up inquiries of White House personnel after a completed background investigation was submitted by the FBI? How many of those investigative cases have been closed?
7. To what degree is continuous evaluation of White House personnel used by the FBI?
8. Are you aware of any White House personnel who have not yet submitted SF-86 forms to the FBI for investigation?
9. Are any background investigations for security clearances of White House personnel being held up as part of the 700,000 case backlog under the National Background Investigations Bureau?
10. During testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats stated that holders of interim security clearances should have limited in terms of the kind of information they can be in a position to receive or not receive. Are you aware of any White House personnel who received an interim clearance but later had that clearance revoked?

I request you provide me with this information no later than March 1, 2018 and look forward to your prompt response to this inquiry.

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Finally, enclosed is my previous letter to Director Comey. I ask that you please respond to my initial letter as well as these additional requests for information given the recent developments that have come to light.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Tester". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jon Tester  
U.S. Senator