

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 11, 2024

The Honorable Avril Haines
Director of National Intelligence
1500 Tysons McLean Drive
McLean, VA 22102

The Honorable Jen Easterly
Director of the Cybersecurity and
Infrastructure Security Agency
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Director Haines, Director Easterly, and Director Wray,

Following reports of foreign interference in the 2024 elections, we ask that your agencies investigate the extent of this malicious interference and provide recommendations on how to prevent such interference from occurring in future elections.

The right to vote is a sacred cornerstone of our democracy. It is unacceptable that any foreign actor interferes, or attempts to interfere, with this right. In the weeks preceding the November 5, 2024 elections, numerous U.S. officials documented efforts by foreign actors to spread misinformation and disinformation through online channels to undermine faith in the democratic process.¹ Foreign actors also attempted to target and hack both Presidential campaigns.²

On Election Day itself, those foreign actors escalated.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, polling locations in states across the country received false bomb threats from foreign e-mail domains.³ Thankfully, these apparent efforts to

¹ *Joint ODNI, FBI, and CISA Statement*, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (Nov. 4, 2024), <https://www.cisa.gov/news-events/news/joint-odni-fbi-and-cisa-statement-1> (describing activities of Russia and Iran); *Statement from Secretary Raffensperger*, Office of Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger (Oct. 31, 2024), <https://sos.ga.gov/news/statement-secretary-raffensperger>.

² Devlin Barrett, Jonathan Swan, and Maggie Haberman, *Chinese Hackers Are Said to Have Targeted Phones Used by Trump and Vance*, New York Times (Oct. 25, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/25/us/politics/trump-vance-hack.html> (“Without identifying those who were targeted, the F.B.I. and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued a joint statement attributing the hacking to ‘actors affiliated with the People’s Republic of China.’”); see also *Foreign Threats to the 2020 US Federal Elections*, National Intelligence Council (Mar. 20, 2021), <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ICA-declass-16MAR21.pdf> (describing foreign threats to the 2020 elections).

³ *FBI Statement on Bomb Threats to Polling Locations*, FBI National Press Office (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-statement-on-bomb-threats-to-polling-locations>; see also Maggie Miller and Alfred Ng, *Russian Email Addresses Linked to Bomb Threats in Multiple States*, Politico (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://www.politico.com/live-updates/2024/11/05/2024-elections-live-coverage-updates-analysis/russian-bomb->

shut down polling locations largely failed. However, at least 67 polling locations in 19 counties⁴ across the country, in Georgia, Michigan, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania,⁵ received threats that day, with many shutting down temporarily. This includes 13 polling locations in Georgia that temporarily closed following hoax bomb threats.⁶ Many were located in majority-Black precincts in the metro Atlanta area.⁷

While we do not question the final outcome of the election, any foreign interference in our elections is an attack on the foundations of our republic. That is particularly true of efforts to directly prevent eligible Americans from casting a ballot.

Online disinformation intended to sow doubt about election integrity is alarming enough. That foreign actors would take direct steps to shut down polling locations on Election Day is a new and deeply concerning escalation, and it must not stand. No voter should ever be turned away from a polling booth because a foreign actor falsely reported a bomb threat. A failure to respond to these egregious actions will only embolden foreign actors and invite more severe activity in future elections.

In light of these events, and pursuant to requirements under 50 U.S.C. § 3371c, we request that your agencies investigate the extent of this malicious interference, particularly as it pertains to interference with the operations of polling locations, and provide recommendations on how to prevent such interference from occurring in future elections. In addition, we ask that you brief us in writing and in person on your investigation by January 10, 2025.

Thank you for your attention to this issue of critical importance.

Sincerely,

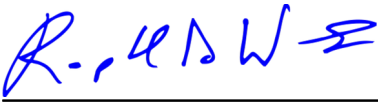
threats-00187487 (“Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger (R) said his office had linked Russia to bomb threats against multiple polling stations in the state on Tuesday. . . . Michigan was also the target of Russian-linked bomb threats.”).

⁴ Kevin Collier, Tyler Kingkade, and Tom Winter, *Election Day Bomb Threats Overwhelmingly Targeted Democrat-leaning Counties*, NBC News (Nov. 8, 2024), <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/security/election-day-bomb-threats-overwhelmingly-targeted-democrat-leaning-rcna179006>.

⁵ Tim Reid and Sarah N. Lynch, *Hoax Bomb Threats Linked to Russia Target Polling Places in Battleground States, FBI Says*, Reuters (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/fake-bomb-threats-linked-russia-briefly-close-georgia-polling-locations-2024-11-05>.

⁶ Alexis Stevens, *FBI: Georgia One of 5 Swing States Targeted by Hoax Bomb Threats Linked to Russia*, Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Nov. 6, 2024), <https://www.ajc.com/news/crime/fbi-georgia-one-of-5-swing-states-targeted-by-hoax-bomb-threats-linked-to-russia/TNFFZJ3DB5ABBD3O77E3DHG7KE>; Justin Gray, *Despite Bomb Threats, Officials Say Results Were Processed Fast for Record-Breaking Election*, WSB-TV Atlanta (Nov. 6, 2024), <https://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/atlanta/despite-bomb-threats-officials-say-results-were-processed-fast-record-breaking-election/4CNFJGJTWJBSDDOMUL3MD4BDB4>.

⁷ Josh Fiallo, *Russia Blamed for Bomb Threat Hoaxes at Majority-Black Voting Sites in Georgia*, Daily Beast (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://www.thedailybeast.com/russia-blamed-for-bomb-threat-hoax-at-majority-black-voting-sites-in-georgia>; Chris Boyette and Ryan Young, *Non-Credible Bomb Threats Against Atlanta-Area Polling Places Were From Russia, Secretary of State Says*, CNN (Nov. 5, 2024), <https://www.cnn.com/2024/11/05/us/georgia-non-credible-bomb-threat-russia/index.html>; Chauncey Alcorn, *Black Polling Precincts in Atlanta Receive Bomb Threats*, Capital B Atlanta (Nov. 5, 2024) <https://atlanta.capitalbnews.org/bomb-threats-atlanta-election-russia>.



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



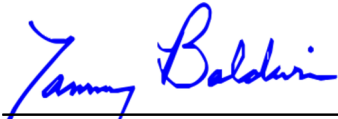
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



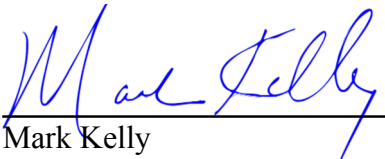
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



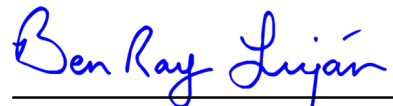
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator