

# **Senators call on Deputy Attorney General nominee Rosenstein to clarify stance on sessions recusal, respond to intel report on Russian cyberattacks**

March 14 2017 9:09 AM



**WASHINGTON**—U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Al Franken (D-MN), Chris Coons (D-DE), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) today called on Rod Rosenstein, President Trump's nominee to be Deputy Attorney General, to clarify his views on Attorney General Jeff Sessions' partial recusal on Justice Department investigations into the Trump Administration's Russian

connections, if he discussed Sessions' recusal with the White House prior to the announcement, and to respond to the U.S. Intelligence Community's assessment of Russian cyberattacks on the 2016 presidential election.

Full text of the senators' letter:

March 13, 2017

The Honorable Rod Rosenstein  
United States Attorney for the District of Maryland  
United States Department of Justice  
36 S. Charles Street 4th Fl.  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Mr. Rosenstein:

As the Committee considers your pending nomination to be Deputy Attorney General, we request that you answer the following questions no later than .

1. It is troubling that neither you nor Attorney General Sessions read the unclassified January 6 Intelligence Community Assessment entitled "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections" prior to your confirmation hearings. We appreciate that you made the commitment during your hearing that you would read the report. Do you accept the "Key Judgments" presented in the report? Please identify any areas of disagreement and explain the basis for your disagreement.
2. On March 2, Attorney General Sessions issued a public statement saying "I have decided to recuse myself from any existing or future investigations of any matters related in any way to the campaigns for President of the United States." In his March 6 letter to the Committee, Attorney General Sessions acknowledged our concerns as to "why had not recused from 'Russian contacts with the Trump transition team and administration.'" He then wrote "I understand the scope of the recusal described in the Department's press release would include any such matters." At your hearing Senator Durbin asked you to clarify your understanding of the scope of the Attorney General's recusal based on his plain language. Do you agree with Attorney General Sessions that he has recused himself from any existing or future investigations of any matters related in any way to Russian contacts with the Trump campaign, transition team and administration?

3. Have you communicated with anyone in the White House or Justice Department regarding Attorney General Sessions' recusal decision? If so, please identify the individuals with whom you communicated and what was discussed.

Thank you for your attention to these questions. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

RICHARD J. DURBIN  
United States Senator

AMY KLOBUCHAR  
United States Senator

CHRIS COONS  
United States Senator

AL FRANKEN  
United States Senator

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senator

MAZIE K. HIRONO  
United States Senator