

Sen. Duckworth, Schumer Lead Senate Dems In Request To Review President's Daily Briefs

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WASHINGTON, DC – Combat Veteran and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), a member of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) who served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years, along with Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) led ten Senate Democrats in sending a letter to President Donald Trump demanding information related to the intelligence that Russia has been covertly offering bounties to Taliban-linked militants for killing U.S. servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan. The Senators are requesting that the Administration immediately make available any relevant President's Daily Briefs and all related materials from National Security Council meetings. They are also calling for Administration officials to testify in front of Congress on this matter.

In part, the Senators wrote, “Beyond the numerous public reports alleging that you authorized no action based on the alleged intelligence, your administration does not dispute that you have indeed not directed any new actions to send Russia a message that such provocations will not go unpunished. According to reports, you did not even send a diplomatic request demanding that Russia stop offering bounty payments for killing U. S. troops following a March 2020 interagency meeting where a menu of policy

responses to Russian aggression was proposed. There can be no higher national security priority than the protection of our Armed Forces abroad, and the people's representatives in Congress need to know what is going on here.”

Along with Duckworth and Schumer, the letter was also signed by Senators Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Dick Durbin (D-IL).

Full letter text is included below and available [here](#).

Dear President Trump:

We write to request information on the disturbing press reports asserting that our Nation's Intelligence Community (IC) may have assessed that Unit 29155 of the Russian military intelligence service (GRU) – a unit previously tied in public reporting to other violent activities including the poisoning and attempted assassination of Sergei Skripal – has reportedly been offering bounties to Taliban-linked militants for killing U.S. servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan. Further, public reporting indicates that your Administration may have been informed of this alleged intelligence as early as February 2020 but took no action to punish Russia in response.

Beyond the numerous public reports alleging that you authorized no action based on the alleged intelligence, your administration does not dispute that you have indeed not directed any new actions to send Russia a message that such provocations will not go unpunished. According to reports, you did not even send a diplomatic request demanding that Russia stop offering bounty payments for killing U.S. troops following a March 2020 interagency meeting where a menu of policy responses to Russian aggression was proposed.

In fact, you appeared to offer aid and sympathy to Russia by writing on Twitter on June 29, 2020: “Intel just reported to me that they did not find this info credible, and therefore did not report it to me or @VP. Possibly another fabricated Russia Hoax, maybe by the Fake News @nytimesbooks, wanting to make Republicans look bad!!!”

There can be no higher national security priority than the protection of our Armed Forces abroad, and the people's representatives in Congress need to know what is going on here. Accordingly, we request the following no later than Friday, July 17, 2020:

1. An immediate opportunity for Members of Congress to review any relevant President's Daily Brief (PDB) including, but not limited to, the PDBs from February 2020 that public reports allege addressed this matter;

2. That you direct members of your administration – including the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, Director of National Intelligence, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Commander of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan and the Resolute Support Mission – to immediately make themselves available to testify on these alarming public reports and transparently detail what steps, if any, were taken to address alleged intelligence indicating that the Russian GRU was offering bounties for killing U.S. servicemembers; and
3. That you provide to Congress all documentation related to National Security Council (NSC) meetings, including but not limited to meeting notes, memoranda, slides, policy papers, talking points and as well as direct NSC staff to make themselves available for interviews on this matter with relevant Congressional committees.