

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:

AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,
AND FORESTRY

ARMED SERVICES

HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

February 4, 2026

The Honorable Tulsi Gabbard
Director of National Intelligence

The Honorable John Ratcliffe
Director of the Central Intelligence Agency

Lieutenant General William Hartman
Performing the Duties of Director, National Security Agency

Major General Constantin Nicolet
Acting Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

Dear Director Gabbard, Director Ratcliffe, Lieutenant General Hartman, and Major General Nicolet:

I write today with my deep concerns that the Trump Administration is using our intelligence community (IC) to target American citizens and to request your assurances that you have not and will not focus the organizations you oversee on the American public. As you know, the IC exists to defend the United States against *foreign adversaries*—not to monitor, investigate, or target Americans.ⁱ The laws and regulations that restrict collection on American citizens date back to the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1947, and these rules have been reinforced steadily over decades by Congress and by presidents of both parties.

As a Senator on the Armed Services and Homeland Security Committees, and as a former CIA officer who also helped stand up the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), my hope is that you can provide easy confirmation, in writing, to the enclosed questions that speak to the very heart of who we are as Americans. My concerns are based on three things: the President's directive on domestic terrorism, the existence of weaponization working groups led by the IC, and, most recently, the involvement of the ODNI at a seizure of election records in Fulton County, Georgia.

First, in September, the President signed National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 (NSPM-7), which directed Attorney General Bondi to create a list of "domestic terrorist organizations" and to reorient the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces, of which the IC is a regular participant, toward these domestic organizations.ⁱⁱ This NSPM significantly expanded the definition of "domestic terrorism", heretofore defined by the USA PATRIOT Act and explicitly tied to criminal actions.ⁱⁱⁱ On December 4, Attorney General Bondi further directed the use of "all available tools" in the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces to carry out NSPM-7.^{iv}

As you know, the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, expressly prohibits the IC from targeting First Amendment protected speech, so any attempt to use the IC against domestic organizations based on their views on, for example, race, gender, religion, family, or morality is illegal.^v As of today, neither the list of new domestic terrorist organizations, nor how the IC might be participating in the targeting of these organizations, has been provided to Congress or been made public.

Second, the Administration has confirmed the existence of at least three working groups – two led by the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) – seeking retribution against federal employees and former officials the President believes have wronged him.^{vi} The “Weaponization Working Group”, “Director’s Initiative Group”, and “Interagency Weaponization Working Group” are all publicized names.^{vii} These groups have targeted former military officials, former elected officials such as President Obama, public health officials, and other individuals the Trump Administration hopes to purge from the government or prosecute for alleged crimes.^{viii} Participation in these weaponization groups reportedly includes officials from the ODNI, the CIA, and the Department of Defense.^{ix} My concern is that these activities indicate a willingness to use IC personnel and resources to go after President Trump’s perceived political enemies, precisely the type of activity that Congress and presidents of both parties have sought to end since Watergate through permanent congressional intelligence oversight committees, law, and executive order.

Last, but most alarming, was the direct involvement of DNI Gabbard at the Fulton County FBI raid of 2020 election records on January 28th. The DNI has a role in the investigation of the *foreign actors*, such as Russia or Iran, in our elections – in line with the IC’s mission of focusing on foreign threats and adversaries. But the DNI has provided no intelligence pointing to a foreign threat that might justify the IC’s participation in this raid. By her own admission, DNI Gabbard participated at the request of the President, in line with his claims of election fraud, despite US courts affirming more than 60 times that there was no widespread fraud in the 2020 election.^x

As I hope we can agree, any effort to use our IC personnel or tools for targeting domestic political purposes would represent a dangerous slippery slope. The IC employs tens of thousands of highly trained operators, analysts, and technical specialists who join to serve the apolitical mission of protecting the United States from foreign threats. Their work is powered by the most sophisticated surveillance, monitoring, and targeting tools in the world that allow us to collect troves of intelligence on our adversaries. Turning these tools against our own citizens would not only be illegal but would undercut longstanding American values of a right to privacy and ability to speak out against our government without fear of retribution.

In light of the above, I ask for your answers to the following questions no later than February 18, 2026:

- Are IC personnel, tools, or assets being used, or will they be used, to identify or target the list of new “domestic terrorists” under NSPM-7? If so, which IC units are or will participate and what intelligence tools or assets are or will be used to identify or target those on the domestic terrorist list?

- Are any IC personnel, tools, or assets being used to target Americans as part of the “Weaponization Working Group,” the “Director’s Initiative Group,” or the “Interagency Weaponization Working Group”? If so, what IC personnel, tools, or assets are being used to support these groups?
- Has ODNI has concluded, after six years, that foreign actors targeted Fulton County in our 2020 election? If so, please provide the specific intelligence or information to support these allegations.
- Please confirm that the IC, and your agency or office in particular, is and will continue to execute its duties in compliance with the Constitution and all laws, orders, regulations, and guidelines, including specifically the limitations on spying on Americans in the National Security Act of 1947, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and Executive Order 12333.

Leading the IC and protecting the United States from foreign threats is one of the most consequential responsibilities in our country. You have a critical duty to uphold our laws and Constitution every day and provide transparency on how you plan to implement the President’s directives. My hope is that the above questions are easy for you to answer, and you will do so without hesitation.

Sincerely,



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator

ⁱ Executive Order 12333

ⁱⁱ “Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence,” *The White House*, September 25, 2025, www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/09/countering-domestic-terrorism-and-organized-political-violence/.

ⁱⁱⁱ 18 U.S. Code § 2331

^{iv} “Memorandum for All Federal Prosecutors Law Enforcement Agencies Department of Justice Grant-making Components,” *Office of the Attorney General*, December 4, 2025, www.kenklippenstein.com/api/v1/file/310cfb3c-c9f4-4828-870c-63842dc14c2d.pdf.

^v 50 U.S. Code § 3040a

^{vi} Jonathan Landay, Sarah N. Lynch, and Phil Stewart, “Wide-ranging group of US officials pursues Trump's fight against ‘Deep State’,” *Reuters*, October 21, 2025, www.reuters.com/world/us/wide-ranging-group-us-officials-pursues-trumps-fight-against-deep-state-2025-10-20/; Brooke Singman, “Trump admin agencies coordinating to expose Biden admin’s ‘prolific and dangerous’ weaponization of government,” *Fox News*, October 20, 2025, www.foxnews.com/politics/trump-admin-agencies-coordinating-expose-biden-admins-prolific-dangerous-weaponization-government.

^{vii} “Restoring the Integrity and Credibility of the Department of Justice,” *Department of Justice*, February 5, 2025, www.justice.gov/ag/media/1388506/dl?inline; “DNI Gabbard Establishes Task Force to Restore Trust in the Intelligence Community and End Weaponization of Government Against Americans,” *Office of the Director of National Intelligence*, April 8, 2025, www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/press-releases-2025/4063-pr-05-25; Singman, “Trump admin agencies coordinating to expose Biden admin’s ‘prolific and dangerous’ weaponization of government,” *Fox News*.

^{viii} Steve Benen, “DNI Gabbard concocts odd ‘treasonous conspiracy’ theory, eyes Russia probe prosecutions,” *MSNOW*, July 21, 2025, www.ms.now/rachel-maddow-show/maddowblog/dni-gabbard-concocts-odd-treasonous-conspiracy-theory-eyes-russia-prob-rcna219985; Landay, Lynch, and Stewart, “Wide-ranging group of US officials pursues Trump's fight against ‘Deep State’,” *Reuters*.

^{ix} Landay, Lynch, and Stewart, “Wide-ranging group of US officials pursues Trump's fight against ‘Deep State’,” *Reuters*.

^x Tulsi Gabbard, Letter to Vice Chairman Warner and Ranking Member Himes, February 2, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000019c-21aa-dbc5-a7bd-39bec4830000>.