

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2020

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker
Governor of Illinois
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

We write in regard to your February 21, 2020 letter to President Trump on the dismissal of Joseph Maguire, the former acting Director of National Intelligence. As you have copied only the Republican members of the Illinois congressional delegation on this letter, we feel compelled to respond and set the record straight on the factual errors within the letter. Further, we are alarmed that your focus is directed at White House personnel decisions while our shared State of Illinois currently faces a number of serious election administration and security issues.

You state in your letter that news reports had indicated that President Trump relieved former DNI Maguire “due to his office’s testimony” which “highlighted the continued threat” that Russia poses to our nation’s election security. Subsequent to your letter, additional reporting indicated that DNI Maguire’s office overstated Russia’s efforts in the 2020 election.¹ We do, however, agree with you that Russia is to be taken very seriously and our national intelligence agencies must continue to address the threat of election meddling by foreign actors. It is worth mentioning that there is legislation pending in the House, i.e., H.R. 4736 – the “Honest Elections Act” and H.R. 5707 – the “Protect American Voters Act” – that would address these threats directly but has yet to be taken up by the Majority.

Your letter also appears to disregard existing election security efforts by the Illinois State Board of Elections (“ISBE”), which includes a close working relationship with the Department of Homeland Security. Your letter states that, “Nation-state actors (including Russia) targeted the election infrastructure in the State of [Illinois] during the 2016 election cycles.” The ISBE has been tirelessly working to address known vulnerabilities in our State’s election systems since the 2016 attack, and the implication that our State is lacking in these efforts undercuts this important work in the eye of the public.

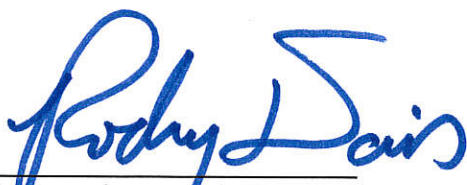
Further, our State must get its own house in order before criticizing decisions made in Washington. In its administration of automatic voter registration, the Illinois Secretary of State’s Office recently permitted the registration of over 500 reported non-citizens through an easily preventable software glitch and forwarded nearly 4,700 16-year-olds to be registered to vote.

¹ Jeremy Diamond, Jake Tapper, and Zachary Cohen, *US intelligence briefer appears to have overstated assessment of 2020 Russian interference*, CNN, Feb. 23, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/23/politics/intelligence-briefer-russian-interference-trump-sanders/index.html>.

Additionally, due to a data-matching error between state agencies over 700 formerly incarcerated persons lost their voter registration status. Moreover, despite your campaign promise of ending political gerrymandering in Illinois, we have yet to see action from you to enact an independent redistricting board. These outstanding issues, which are relevant to our voters, require your immediate attention and should be prioritized.

Finally, we are disappointed that you included only Republican members of the Illinois delegation on your letter to the President. Election security is an issue that should rise above petty partisan politics, and one that will require courageous partnership between our political parties in order to ensure that foreign actors will never be able to manipulate an election on U.S. soil. The integrity of our democracy rests on public confidence in our elections. We should be working together to ensure the security and integrity of Illinois' elections, and we hope this effort moving forward will be a priority for you as it has been for us.

Sincerely,


Rep. Rodney Davis (IL-13)
Rep. Mike Bost (IL-12)
Rep. John Shimkus (IL-15)
Rep. Adam Kinzinger (IL-16)
Rep. Darin LaHood (IL-18)