

December 22, 2017

Open Letter from Republican and/or Conservative Former Elected and Senior Officials Defending Mueller

Special Counsel Robert Mueller deserves the support of all Americans. As Republicans and/or conservatives, including those who have served in elected and appointed positions, we reject recent efforts to discredit him. These efforts undermine the institutions that protect the rule of law and so our nation. Mueller must be allowed to complete his investigation without interference.

Director Mueller has a stellar record of service to our country. Mueller served in the United States Marine Corps and earned a Bronze Star with Valor, two Navy Commendation Medals, and a Purple Heart while leading a rifle platoon in Vietnam. After gaining twelve years of experience as a prosecutor, Mueller held Senate-confirmed positions under four Presidents—two Republicans and two Democrats. Mueller's appointment was hailed by those on both sides of the aisle. Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein was recently asked whether he had seen good cause to fire Mueller, and he gave a straightforward answer: “no.”

We understand concerns about a senior FBI agent detailed to Mueller's team who sent anti-Trump texts with an attorney who had also worked on the team. But when Mueller learned of the texts, he ousted the agent. The attorney had already departed. That is evidence of the high standards that Mueller has imposed. Some have also argued that Mueller's hiring of individuals who have made donations to Democrats is a sign that his team is partisan. But the Department of Justice is prohibited from considering the political activity of personnel when it makes employment decisions. Many of the undersigned donated to candidates of one or another party in or around our government employment. It never impacted our faithful adherence to our oath to support and defend the Constitution. We have worked with the Department of Justice, including the FBI, over many years and through both Republican and Democratic administrations. We have faith in those institutions' ability to ensure that biases are ferreted out and prevented from influencing investigations and prosecutions.

We are above all moved to write because of the vital importance of the Special Counsel's mission. In January 2017, the Director of National Intelligence released the collective assessment of the CIA, the NSA, and the FBI that “Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election.” Special Counsel Mueller was appointed to “ensure a full and thorough investigation of the Russian government's efforts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election...including any links and/or coordination between the Russian government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump.” It is critical that the Special Counsel be allowed to complete his review with the full support of DOJ and without interference, for the benefit of the country as well as for that of the Administration.

We urge the Administration, members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, and the American public, to support the work of Special Counsel Mueller to its conclusion, whatever it may be. Conversely, we believe that impeding the Special Counsel's investigation would be a dangerous attempt to obstruct an investigation of a serious attack on our free institutions. Our concerns include not only firing Mueller, but other efforts to impair his work. For example, any attempt to remove the Deputy Attorney General or the Attorney General in order to replace them with individuals who would impede the Special Counsel's activity must be rejected.

We note, finally, that we do not prejudge the outcome of Mueller's investigation. We hope that the country will

give the Special Counsel's findings the respect they deserve, whatever they may be, just as we now call for everyone to allow his investigation to proceed.

Signed,

Arne Carlson

Former Governor of Minnesota, 1991-1999

Mike Castle

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives 1993-2011; former Governor of Delaware, 1985-1992

Bill Clinger

Former Chair, House Oversight Committee and member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-PA), 1979-1997

Eliot Cohen

Former Counselor of the State Department, 2007-2009

Thomas Coleman

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-MO), 1976-1993

Mickey Edwards

Former Chair, House Republican Policy Committee and member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-OK), 1977-1993

Wayne Gilchrest

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-MD), 1991-2009

Chuck Hagel

Former Secretary of Defense, 2013-2015; former member, U.S. Senate (R-NE), 1997-2009

Amo Houghton

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives, (R-NY) 1987 - 2005

Bob Inglis

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-SC), 1993-1999; 2005-2011

David Jolly

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-FL), 2014-2017

William Kristol

Chief of Staff to the Vice President, 1989-1993

John LeBoutillier

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-NY), 1981-1983

Pete McCloskey

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives, (R-CA) 1967 -1983

Richard Painter

Former Associate Counsel to the President and chief White House ethics lawyer, 2005-07

Larry Pressler

Former member, U.S. Senate (R-SD), 1979-1997; former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-SD), 1975-1979

Claudine Schneider

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-RI) 1981-1991

Christopher Shays

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-CT), 1987-2009

Peter Smith

Former member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-VT), 1989-1991

Matthew Waxman

Former Deputy Director of Secretary of State's Policy Planning staff, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, and National Security Council staff member

Christie Whitman

Former EPA Administrator, 2001-2003; former Governor of New Jersey, 1994-2001

Dov Zakheim

Former Under Secretary of Defense, 2001-2004