

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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September 19, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to request that you issue a subpoena to compel the State Department to produce documents it has refused to produce about Special Representative for Iran Brian Hook and significant acts of retaliation he appears to have taken against career State Department employees when he served as the Senior Policy Advisor and Director of Policy Planning.

On August 16, 2018, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that Mr. Hook would lead the State Department's Iran Action Group as Special Representative for Iran. On August 22, 2018, I sent a letter with Ranking Member Eliot Engel of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs to Secretary Pompeo requesting information and documents about Mr. Hook's reported acts of retaliation, as well as about measures the State Department has taken to investigate and stop retaliation against career employees.¹

Just as with the multiple prior letters we sent about political retaliation against career employees, the State Department has not responded to our letter and has not produced the documents we requested.² I am writing to ask you to put the full force of our Committee behind

¹ Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and Ranking Member Eliot Engel, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, to Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State (Aug. 22, 2018) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/2018-08-22.EEC%20Engel%20to%20Pompeo-State%20re%20Hook%20Information%20and%20Document%20Request.pdf>).

² *See, e.g.*, Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Ranking Member Eliot Engel, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Ranking Member Robert Menendez, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, to Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State (June 19, 2018) (online at <https://democrats-foreignaffairs.house.gov/sites/democrats.foreignaffairs.house.gov/files/06-18-18%20Letter%20to%20Secretary%20Pompeo%20on%20Prohibited%20Personnel%20Practices%20at%20State%20Department.pdf>).

investigating repeated allegations of political cleansing of career employees at the State Department.³

Specifically, I request that you issue a subpoena to compel the State Department to produce the following documents it has withheld for months regarding retaliation against career employees:

- (1) all documents and communications referring or relating to any reassignment or proposed reassignment that was considered or ordered since January 20, 2017, of career or civil service employees at the Department;
- (2) all documents and communications referring or relating to any proposed or actual reassignment or removal of career or civil service employees at the Department since January 20, 2017, based on alleged personal political beliefs, prior service with previous Administrations, or work on prior Administrations' foreign policy priorities, including any documents authored by, copying, involving, or referring to:
 - (a) Christine Ciccone;
 - (b) Makan Delrahim;
 - (c) Sean Doocey;
 - (d) Julia Haller;
 - (e) Brian Hook;
 - (f) Edward Lacey;
 - (g) Matthew Mowers; or
 - (h) Margaret Peterlin;
- (3) all documents and communications referring or relating to proposed or actual personnel actions since January 20, 2017, against Sahar Nowrouzadeh, including the curtailment of her detail to the Policy Planning staff;
- (4) all documents or communications referring or relating to State Department Senior Adviser Mari Stull's efforts to categorize, vet, or research career State Department employees and employees of international institutions, including searches on social media websites;
- (5) all documents referring or relating to lists of career State Department employees and employees of international institutions created by Mari Stull or any other political appointee at the State Department; and
- (6) all documents or communications referring or relating to research conducted by political appointees relating to perceived political views of career employees.

³ See, e.g., Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings to Chairman Trey Gowdy, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (July 12, 2018) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/2018-07-12.EEC%20to%20Gowdy%20re%20State%20Dept%20Cleansing.pdf>).

If you choose not to issue this subpoena yourself, then I ask that you place this matter on the agenda for our next regularly scheduled business meeting so all Committee Members will have the opportunity to vote on a motion to issue this subpoena.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member