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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

October 1, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pence
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vice President Pence:

As Ranking Member of the Senate Committee charged with exercising oversight of the foreign relations of the United States, I write seeking details about your interactions with Ukrainian officials, including President Zelensky. The contents of President Trump's July 25 call with President Zelensky raises serious questions about the conduct of our foreign policy, including whether U.S. security assistance to Ukraine was used to elicit action aimed at helping the President politically.

Earlier this year, you were reportedly planning to attend President Zelensky's May 2019 inauguration. According to a whistleblower complaint addressed to congressional intelligence committees, President Trump instructed you to cancel your planned travel to Ukraine.¹ Three days earlier, the President's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, also cancelled his planned trip, saying Zelensky was "surrounded by enemies" of President Trump."²

According to the whistleblower complaint, President Trump did not want to meet with President Zelensky until he saw how Zelensky "chose to act" in office. The complaint also describes how, according to multiple officials, "Ukrainian leadership was led to believe that a meeting or phone call between the President and President Zelensky would depend on whether Zelensky showed willingness to 'play ball'" on certain issues, including investigating one of President Trump's political opponents.³

On September 1, 2019—approximately six weeks after President Trump ordered all U.S. security assistance to Ukraine to be delayed—you met with President Zelensky in Warsaw, Poland. When asked by a reporter on that trip whether you could "assure Ukraine that the hold-up of that money has absolutely nothing to do with efforts, including by Rudy Giuliani, to try to dig up dirt on the Biden family," you did not answer the question. You also echoed President Trump's

¹ Whistleblower Complaint to the Chairmen of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Select Committee on Intelligence, Aug. 12, 2019, Classified Appendix at 1-2.

² Andrew Restuccia & Darrel Samuelsohn, "Giuliani cancels Ukraine trip amid political meddling charges," *Politico*, May 11, 2019.

³ Whistleblower Complaint, Classified Appendix at 2.

emphasis on “corruption”—which he has used as a euphemism to refer to efforts to investigate his political rivals.⁴

As the summary of the call with President Zelensky demonstrates, President Trump requested a foreign government help investigate his domestic political opponent. While I hope that he was alone in making such an inappropriate request, your statements regarding your discussions with Ukraine officials raise questions whether you may have helped carry that message. To that end, and to assist the Committee in conducting thorough oversight of U.S. foreign policy, I request that you answer the following:

1. Why did you cancel your planned trip to Ukraine in May 2019? Did the President instruct you to cancel your trip and, if so, what reason did he give you for doing so?
2. When did you first become aware of President Trump’s request to President Zelensky to help investigate one of his political opponents or unsubstantiated theories related to Ukraine’s involvement in the 2016 U.S. election?
3. Did President Trump ever ask you to convey to President Zelensky, other Ukrainian officials, or any other individuals, President Trump’s desire for assistance in investigating one of his political opponents or their family members, or unsubstantiated theories related to Ukraine’s involvement in the 2016 U.S. election? Did you ever convey such a request?
4. What did you convey to President Zelensky, specifically, with regard to “corruption” in Ukraine?
5. When did you first become aware that U.S. security assistance to Ukraine had been delayed? Did you seek to find out why the assistance was delayed or take any steps to address the delay?
6. Are you aware of any records of communications between the President and foreign leaders that were stored on the National Security Council Intelligence Collaboration Environment (NICE)? If so, please provide a detailed list of such records.

Please respond to the above questions no later than October 4, 2019. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "M".

Robert Menendez
Ranking Member

⁴ “Remarks by Vice President Pence at the Commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Outbreak of World War II, Warsaw, Poland,” Sept. 1, 2019, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-commemoration-80th-anniversary-outbreak-world-war-ii-warsaw-poland/>.