



Statement regarding the Report on the Investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election

**Chair Ellen L. Weintraub
Federal Election Commission**

April 18, 2019

Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III's report, released today by the Department of Justice to Congress, provides a detailed picture of Russia's alarming and extensive efforts to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

The report describes how Russia's social-media and hacking campaigns kicked into high gear in 2016 to influence the U.S. presidential election. The Russian government spent money to create and run botnets, spent money to organize and promote dozens of political rallies within the United States, and spent money to successfully hack the Clinton campaign, Democratic Party organizations, and state election administrators and agencies. Every bit of this activity is in connection with a federal, state, or local election, and every bit of it violates 52 U.S.C. § 30121, the ban on foreign-national spending in U.S. elections. From the Special Counsel's report and other analysis, we know that much of this activity continues today.

The FEC must study this report and exercise both our enforcement authority looking back and our policymaking authority looking forward to address any potential violations of federal campaign finance laws. Our enforcement work necessarily proceeds confidentially. Our policymaking work is public.

The FEC will address Russia's efforts to interfere with U.S. elections at our next regularly scheduled open meeting on April 25.

This Commission's response to foreign threats should transcend partisan politics. Russia's interference in our 2016 election exemplifies an ongoing threat to American democracy and our national security. The Commission must renew its efforts to address any potential violation of the foreign-national spending ban. I invite my colleagues to bring every idea they have for protecting our elections in 2020 and beyond. The Mueller report removes all doubt—the FEC must act decisively to protect our elections from foreign interference.