

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2026

The Honorable Kashyap Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Patel:

Winston Churchill described Russia as “a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” Now, we have a puzzle buried in a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside that enigma: Why is the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) visiting a hostile foreign power that has been committing war crimes, conducting influence operations against U.S. elections, conducting malicious cyberattacks against our critical infrastructure, and helping our adversaries target and kill American soldiers?

According to public reports, you plan to spend two days in Moscow and St. Petersburg this month.¹ The trip comes amid news that you are personally leading an initiative to forge closer ties between the FBI and Russian and Chinese law enforcement agencies.² These partnerships have included personnel exchanges and intelligence sharing despite the reality that Russian and Chinese officials will exploit such access to conduct espionage against us and infiltrate U.S. government facilities, and even to target dissidents living in the United States.³ Disregarding these concerns, you have reportedly already provided Chinese officials unprecedented access to the American intelligence community, diplomatic personnel, and U.S. government facilities and contractors.⁴ Your imminent Russian excursion appears to foreshadow similar exchanges with the Kremlin.

The trip comes at a particularly inopportune time in U.S.-Russia relations. In the last three weeks, Congress passed and President Donald Trump signed a sweeping sanctions package

¹ Nahal Toosi, Kyle Cheney & John Sakellariadis, *FBI Director Kash Patel Plans Russia Trip*, POLITICO (July 20, 2026), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/07/20/kash-patel-fbi-russia-trip-01005078>.

² Jana Winter, *Under Patel, FBI Forges Unprecedented Law Enforcement Ties with China, Russia*, REUTERS (updated Aug. 6, 2026), <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/under-patel-fbi-forges-unprecedented-law-enforcement-ties-with-china-russia-2026-08-05/>.

³ *Id.*; Mark Walker & Alicia Chen, ‘Orwellian Climate of Fear’: How China Cracks Down on Critics in the U.S., N.Y. TIMES (Dec. 21, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/21/world/asia/chinese-dissidents-protest-art.html>.

⁴ *Id.*

targeting Russia's economy with the goal of forcing Russian President Vladimir Putin to end his atrocity-filled war against Ukraine.⁵

At the same time, Russia continues to carry out espionage operations, cyberattacks, and foreign malign influence activities targeting the United States and our allies.⁶ The Department of Justice recently revealed the FBI disrupted a murder-for-hire plot against a prominent Russian dissident in Washington, D.C., that was orchestrated by Russia's intelligence services.⁷ In addition, Russia has reportedly provided Iran with intelligence to help refine the Islamic Republic's aerial assaults on American troops in the Middle East and has been accused of organizing attacks on infrastructure across Europe in order to test the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's resolve.⁸ Furthermore, just in August, the Trump Administration declared a national emergency barring the importation of certain electrical equipment from Russia because of the "undue risk of catastrophic effects on the security or resilience" of U.S. infrastructure and the economy.⁹ Russia has also carried out malign influence campaigns designed to influence the U.S. electoral process. Following the 2016 elections, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence concluded that the Russian government had engaged in an aggressive, multifaceted campaign to influence the outcome of the 2016 presidential election.¹⁰ The first Trump Administration itself sanctioned Russian agents for waging a covert influence campaign against then-presidential candidate Joe Biden.¹¹ Given all this, it is difficult to understand why America's chief federal law enforcement officer is choosing this moment to foster closer ties between the United States and Vladimir Putin's bloodthirsty kleptocracy.

⁵ Seung Min Kim, *Trump Signs Sweeping Russia Sanctions Bill, Aiming to Choke Off Funds for Moscow in Ukraine War*, Assoc. Press (Sept. 18, 2026), <https://apnews.com/article/donald-trump-russia-sanctions-ukraine-lindsey-graham-d1715ad5e8fecba76bfae51c5f28c45>.

⁶ *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, Office of the Director of National Intelligence (Mar. 2025), <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ATA-2025-24-Mar-Unclass-Final-Final-Version.pdf>.

⁷ Alexander Smith, Tom Winter & Jonathan Dienst, *U.S. Accuses Russia of Plot to Kill a Prominent Dissident in Washington*, NBC NEWS (Sept. 16, 2026), <https://www.nbcnews.com/world/russia/russia-plot-kill-dissident-washington-doj-kremlin-rcna598079>.

⁸ Dan De Luce & Courtney Kube, *Russia Is Sharing Valuable Electronic Intel with Iran, Officials Say, As U.S. War Drags On*, NBC NEWS (July 31, 2026), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/russia-sharing-valuable-electronic-intel-iran-officials-say-us-war-dra-rcna589656>; Joe Barnes & Rozina Sabur, *Russia Sabotages Weapons Factories Across Europe*, The Telegraph (Aug. 23, 2026), <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2026/08/23/russia-targets-weapons-factories-in-new-campaign/>.

⁹ Executive Order 14421, *Declaring A National Emergency to Secure the United States Bulk-Power System*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Aug. 26, 2026), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/08/declaring-a-national-emergency-to-secure-the-united-states-bulk-power-system/>.

¹⁰ U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence United States Senate on Russian Active Measures Campaigns and Interference in the 2016 U.S. Election*, 116th Cong. (Aug. 18, 2020) (S. Rpt. 116-290), <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/2020/08/18/publications-report-select-committee-intelligence-united-states-senate-russian-active-measures/>.

¹¹ Press Release, *Treasury Sanctions Russia-Linked Election Interference Actors*, U.S. DEP'T. OF THE TREASURY (Sept. 10, 2020), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1118>; Press Release, *Treasury Takes Further Action Against Russian-Linked Actors*, U.S. DEP'T. OF THE TREASURY (Jan. 11, 2021), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1232>.

Reportedly, your host during the trip will be the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB), Russia's principal security and counterintelligence agency.¹² The FSB functions as the main successor to the Soviet-era Committee for State Security (KGB) and reports directly to President Putin, himself a former KGB and FSB official. As you well know, the FSB conducts extensive surveillance of foreign government officials, journalists, and other noteworthy individuals who are visiting or living in Russia. According to public reporting, in 2023 the FSB covertly tracked the movements of high-profile Americans in the country, broke into their rooms to plant recording devices, recruited informants from the U.S. Embassy's clerical staff, and ran honey trap operations on Marines stationed in Moscow.¹³ Just last year, numerous investigative organizations revealed that the FSB was conducting cyber espionage operations against foreign embassies and diplomatic organizations in Moscow using local internet service providers.¹⁴

As Director of the FBI, you possess information that would be highly valuable to America's adversaries. Unfortunately, your affinity for the Russian government does not inspire confidence that you will be able to effectively safeguard those secrets. Ahead of your confirmation as Director of FBI, it was revealed that you were paid \$25,000 for your participation in "All the President's Men: The Conspiracy Against Trump," a documentary created by a known Kremlin ally who has served as a paid apologist for Russian violence and espionage abroad.¹⁵ In that film, you disparage the U.S. intelligence community's assessments regarding Russia's attack on our democracy and absurdly claimed that Moscow is not among the United States' "true enemies."¹⁶

We are troubled that you could be traveling to Russia, not only out of apparent ignorance of its malign intentions, but in furtherance of its longstanding campaign to undermine American democracy. A political analyst with close ties to the Kremlin has suggested that the visit presents Russia with an opportunity to influence U.S. politics, telling a Kremlin-friendly media outlet: "It's assumed that Russia has some kind of dirt on the Democrats, and we could provide it, in one form or another, to the American side."¹⁷ In other words, you, an unreconstructed election denier, may be traveling to a foreign country that routinely seeks to influence in American elections just a few weeks before the midterms.

¹² Nahal Toosi, Kyle Cheney & John Sakellariadis, *FBI Director Kash Patel Plans Russia Trip*, POLITICO (July 20, 2026), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/07/20/kash-patel-fbi-russia-trip-01005078>; Paul Kirby, *Vladimir Putin: From Russia's KGB to a Long Presidency Defined by War in Ukraine*, BBC NEWS (Mar. 17, 2024), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-15047823>.

¹³ Joe Parkinson & Drew Hinshaw, *Inside the Secretive Russian Security Force That Targets Americans*, WALL ST. J. (July 7, 2023), <https://www.wsj.com/world/fsb-evan-gershkovich-russia-security-force-dkro-e9cf9a49>.

¹⁴ A.J. Vicens, *Russia's FSB Targets Foreign Embassies in Moscow in Cyber Espionage Campaign, Microsoft Says*, REUTERS (July 31, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/russias-fsb-targets-foreign-embassies-moscow-cyber-espionage-campaign-microsoft-2025-07-31/>.

¹⁵ Greg Miller, et al., *Kash Patel Was Paid by Russian Filmmaker with Kremlin Ties, Documents Show*, WASH. POST (Feb. 7, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/02/07/patel-fbi-russia-lopatonok/>.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Tomas Thor, *Keystone Kash Gets a Warning from Moscow About His Russia Visit*, THE DAILY BEAST (Aug. 10, 2025), <https://www.thedailybeast.com/kash-patel-gets-a-warning-from-moscow-about-his-russia-visit/>.

In the interest of national security, we ask you to reconsider. Call off this trip. If you insist on taking this trip, we request a closed-door briefing no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 12, 2026, concerning your efforts to forge closer ties with Russian and Chinese law enforcement services and the counterintelligence security precautions you are taking.

The briefing should include the following:

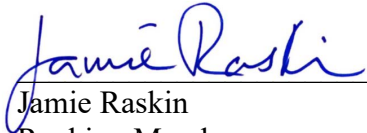
1. A detailed description of the FBI's efforts since January 20, 2025, to promote cooperation with countries that have recently been designated by the Trump Administration as "Covered Foreign Entities" that pose "an undue risk of catastrophic effects on the security or resilience of United States critical infrastructure or the economy of the United States," including, but not limited to, China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.¹⁸
2. A detailed summary, and any accompanying reports, of any internal concerns or objections raised regarding efforts to increase cooperation between the FBI and the governments identified as "Covered Foreign Entities," including, but not limited to, China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
3. A detailed summary of the events precipitating your upcoming visit to Russia, including the identities of the individuals who proposed or requested the meeting, the purported purpose for the visit, and whether you were promised anything in return for making this extraordinary trip.
4. A complete itinerary for your trip to Russia, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The identities of all individuals that you plan to meet while in Russia;
 - b. The proposed topics of discussions and/or agendas for meetings during your visit;
 - c. A detailed description of any social activities that you plan to engage in while in Russia, including a full accounting of your whereabouts during any down time; and
 - d. The identities of all individuals who plan to accompany you on your trip to Russia, including, but not limited to, any private citizens or members of President Trump's family.

¹⁸ Executive Order 14421, *Declaring A National Emergency to Secure the United States Bulk-Power System*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Aug. 26, 2026), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/08/declaring-a-national-emergency-to-secure-the-united-states-bulk-power-system/>.

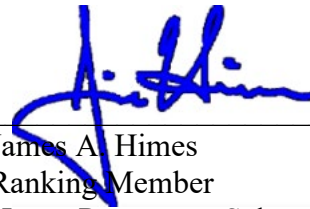
5. A detailed summary of any precautions in place to mitigate the known risks associated with Russian espionage, including secure communications and counterintelligence measures.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
House Committee on the Judiciary



James A. Himes
Ranking Member
House Permanent Select Committee
on Intelligence

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman
House Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Eric "Rick" Crawford, Chairman
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence