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SR-23 (2017-2018)

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ENROLLED MARCH 23, 2017

PASSED IN SENATE MARCH 23, 2017

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2017–2018 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE RESOLUTION

NO. 23

Introduced by Senators Wiener, Atkins, Beall, Bradford, De León, Dodd, Hernandez, Hill, Hueso, Jackson, Lara, McGuire, Mendoza, Mitchell, Newman, Pan, Portantino, and Wieckowski

March 06, 2017

Relative to President Trump's connections with Russia

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SR 23, Wiener.

WHEREAS, United States law enforcement and intelligence agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency, have concluded with high confidence that Russia interfered in the American presidential election that was held in November 2016; and

WHEREAS, Evidence collected by United States intelligence agencies suggests that this interference was ordered by the highest levels of the Russian government, with the direct knowledge and approval of Russian President Vladimir Putin; and

WHEREAS, United States law enforcement and intelligence agencies have determined that this interference was intended to aid Donald Trump and harm his opponent, Hillary Clinton; and

WHEREAS, According to United States intelligence agencies and Russian diplomats, multiple high-ranking members of the Donald Trump presidential campaign had regular contact with senior Russian intelligence officials throughout the presidential campaign; and

WHEREAS, Multiple Trump campaign and administration officials, including National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, Campaign Manager Paul Manafort, and foreign policy adviser Carter Page, resigned their posts after scandals related to their connections with Russia; and

WHEREAS, In light of evidence discovered during the transition period, President Obama's administration felt it necessary to take unprecedented measures to disseminate and protect sensitive information pertaining to Russian interference in the American elections to ensure it was not destroyed or concealed by the incoming administration of the incoming Trump administration; and

WHEREAS, Then Senator and Attorney General nominee, Jeff Sessions, stated under oath in his confirmation hearings before the United States Senate Judiciary Committee that he had no contact with Russian officials during the campaign, when in fact he had multiple meetings with Russian officials during the campaign; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the presidential campaign and since taking office, President Trump has repeatedly praised Russian President Vladimir Putin despite the well documented atrocities and violations of international law that President Putin has committed; and

WHEREAS, Evidence strongly suggests that Russian President Vladimir Putin has personally ordered numerous assassinations of political opponents, journalists, and dissidents; and

WHEREAS, In violation of international law, Russian President Vladimir Putin directed the annexation of Crimea, and has waged a covert war in eastern Ukraine that has already cost tens of thousands of lives, including those of 298 international passengers on Malaysia Airlines Flight 17; and

WHEREAS, Russian President Vladimir Putin directed the Russian intervention in Syria to support the regime of Bashar al-Assad, during which Russian forces indiscriminately bombed thousands of Syrian civilians in hospitals, schools, orphanages, and other noncombatant targets; and

WHEREAS, Reports have surfaced that Russian forces in Syria have bombed United States-backed rebels; and

WHEREAS, Despite substantial evidence of human rights abuses, targeted assassinations, and interference with our election, President Trump has steadfastly refused to criticize Mr. Putin, going so far as to equate the actions of American officials with those of Mr. Putin; and

WHEREAS, President Trump has refused to release his tax returns to demonstrate he is free from dangerous conflicts of interest that could undermine America's national security and the President's executive judgment; and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush, former Speaker Newt Gingrich, Representative Darrell Issa, Senator Lindsey Graham, and Speaker Paul Ryan, as well as several prominent former and current elected officials, have all called for an independent investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 elections; and

WHEREAS, This attack on American democracy is unprecedented in its scale and effect, and has undermined the confidence of Americans in the integrity of our electoral process; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate calls upon the Congress of the United States to conduct a full, independent, and public investigation of any and all connections between the Trump administration, the Trump campaign organization, and the Trump business empire and the Russian government, as well as Russian government-owned enterprises and related business interests; and be it further

Resolved, That given the extremely sensitive nature of this investigation and its implication for the integrity of American democracy, a bipartisan, independent commission and special prosecutor appointed by the bipartisan commission is needed to investigate the full extent of Russia's influence on the Trump White House and the United States elections; and be it further

Resolved, That President Trump must release his tax returns in order to demonstrate he is free from potentially harmful conflicts of interests related to the Russian government and American foreign policy interests or economic policy prerogatives; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.