

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 14, 2017

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2471 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Gowdy,

Thank you for your response to our request for the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (OGR) to investigate reports of sexual misconduct raised against Donald Trump. Our letter has now been signed by 150 Members of Congress, demonstrating the support for a full inquiry into the truth of these allegations. The American public demands the truth as well. A recent Quinnipiac poll found that 70 percent of Americans say the U.S. Congress should investigate accusations of sexual harassment against Donald Trump.

You declined to undertake our request and that of the overwhelming majority of the public with the rationale that, "This Committee, nor any other Committee of Congress, does not, and cannot, prosecute crimes." We appreciate that you recognize these allegations as potential crimes. That said, our request did not ask for a prosecution, but rather an investigation into serious allegations of sexual abuse by Donald Trump.

In fact, OGR has conducted a wide range of investigations that involved allegations of criminal activity, even when parallel prosecutions were underway by the Justice Department. You may recall some of these examples:

- The investigation of Whitewater allegations that occurred years before Bill Clinton was elected President.
- The investigation of Operation Fast and Furious while the Department of Justice pursued multiple criminal prosecutions and convictions.
- The investigation of the Bush Administration's outing of covert CIA operative Valerie Plame, for which I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Vice President Dick Cheney's Chief of Staff, was found guilty and sentenced to 30 months in prison.

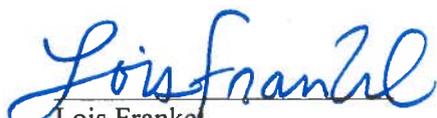
Importantly, OGR has investigated serious allegations of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and rape at multiple federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Justice, and the National Park Service. The Committee held multiple hearings, demanded thousands of pages of documents, and heard accounts from many women who reported these abuses.

While your referral to the Department of Justice (DOJ) recognizes these allegations as criminal, it does not deal with an issue important to the American people. We do not believe a referral to DOJ absolves Congress of its own responsibility to get to the truth and set a standard that victims of sexual crimes can come forward and have a platform to be heard, while at the same time allowing the President to present evidence in his defense.

At a time when women across the country are coming forward with their own harrowing stories of sexual harassment and assault at all levels of society, your reluctance to investigate sends the absolute wrong message. It tells women that powerful leaders are unwilling to investigate this serious misconduct and creates a chilling effect on victims coming forward. It protects the President instead of giving victims the right to be heard.

We urge you to reconsider our request and await your response.

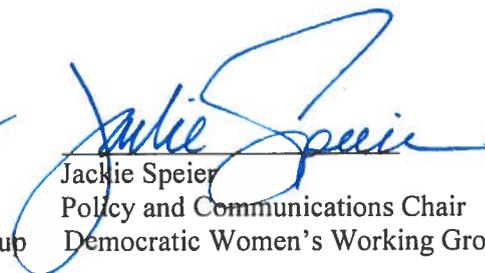
Sincerely,



Lois Frankel
Chair
Democratic Women's Working Group



Brenda L. Lawrence
Vice Chair
Democratic Women's Working Group



Jackie Speier
Policy and Communications Chair
Democratic Women's Working Group