

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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October 21, 2025

The Honorable Pamela J. Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

We write to refer significant evidence that former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) John Brennan knowingly made false statements during his transcribed interview before the Committee on the Judiciary on May 11, 2023.¹ While testifying, Brennan made numerous willfully and intentionally false statements of material fact contradicted by the record established by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) and the CIA.

Under 18 U.S.C. § 1001, a witness commits a crime if he “knowingly and willfully . . . makes any materially false . . . statement or representation” with respect to “any investigation or review, conducted pursuant to the authority of any committee . . . of the Congress[.]”² Congress cannot perform its oversight function if witnesses who appear before its committees do not provide truthful testimony. Making false statements before Congress is a crime that undermines the integrity of the Committee’s constitutional duty to conduct oversight.

The points below support an investigation into whether Brennan made false statements at his transcribed interview:

1. Brennan falsely denied that the CIA relied on the discredited Steele dossier in drafting the post-election Intelligence Community Assessment.

On January 6, 2017, the CIA, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and National Security Agency published a declassified version of an Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) titled *Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections*.³ The ICA stated,

¹ See Transcribed Interview of John Brennan, Former Dir., CIA, by H. Comm. on the Judiciary (May 11, 2023) [hereinafter “Brennan Interview”].

² 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

³ OFF. OF THE DIR. OF NAT’L INTEL., *ASSESSING RUSSIAN ACTIVITIES AND INTENTIONS IN RECENT US ELECTIONS* (Jan. 6, 2017) [hereinafter “Russian Interference ICA”].

among other things, that Russia “developed a clear preference” for President Trump and “aspired to help” him win the election.⁴ This conclusion—now known to be false—was based in part on the Steele dossier, which “was referenced in the ICA main body text, and further detailed in a two-page ICA annex.”⁵ The Steele dossier was a series of reports containing baseless accusations concerning President Trump’s ties to Russia compiled and delivered to the FBI in 2016 by former British intelligence agent Christopher Steele.⁶ Subsequent investigations confirmed that the Clinton campaign and the DNC paid Steele via the law firm Perkins Coie and opposition research firm Fusion GPS to provide derogatory information about Trump’s purported ties to Russia, which resulted in the discredited dossier.⁷ In July 2025, the Trump Administration declassified numerous documents showing that the ICA’s main findings were false and that the Obama Administration knowingly fabricated the findings for the purpose of undermining the Trump Administration.⁸

The newly declassified evidence also confirms that Brennan falsely testified to the Committee. During a transcribed interview on May 11, 2023, Brennan stated that “the CIA was not involved at all with the [Steele] dossier.”⁹ He testified:

Mr. Gaetz. All right. So the fact that the DNC was providing the financing for the Steele dossier’s development doesn’t give you concern that it might be partisan?

Mr. Brennan. Again, that was happening back in 2016. . . . I understand how you were able to tie this to my reference to my expertise, but I don’t see any relevance to the Hunter Biden laptop issue now.

Mr. Gaetz. Well, you said that you signed this letter that we now acknowledge Joe Biden misused in a debate to fool the American public because you’re this great Russia expert, so I’m trying to understand your Russia expertise. And you were involved in analyzing this information.

⁴ *Id.* at 1.

⁵ MAJORITY STAFF REPORT, H. PERM. SELECT COMM. ON INTEL., 116TH CONG., OVERSIGHT INVESTIGATION & REFERRAL: THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT (ICA) “RUSSIA’S INFLUENCE CAMPAIGN TARGETING THE 2016 US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION,” at 23 (2020) [hereinafter “HPSCI Report”].

⁶ *See* JOHN H. DURHAM, U.S. DEP’T OF JUST., OFF. OF SPECIAL COUNS., REPORT ON MATTERS RELATED TO INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES AND INVESTIGATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS, at 11-12, 109-117 (2023) [hereinafter “Durham Report”].

⁷ *See id.* at 109-117; HPSCI Report, *supra* note 5, at 22-32; U.S. DEP’T OF JUST., OFF. OF THE INSPECTOR GEN., REVIEW OF FOUR FISA APPLICATIONS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE FBI’S CROSSFIRE HURRICANE INVESTIGATION, at v-xii (2019); Memorandum from HPSCI Majority Staff to HPSCI Majority Members, Re: Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Abuses at the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (Jan. 18, 2018).

⁸ Sarah Bedford & Kaelan Deese, *Russiatgate definitive timeline: How new intelligence documents fit in*, WASH. EXAM’R (July 26, 2025).

⁹ Brennan Interview, *supra* note 1, at 108.

Mr. Brennan. No, I was not involved in analyzing the dossier at all. I said the first time I actually saw it, it was after the election. And *the CIA was not involved at all with the dossier*. You can direct that to the FBI and to others.

Mr. Gaetz. Were you aware of the FBI's involvement with the dossier?

Mr. Brennan. Yes, because there's an annex in the ICA, the Intelligence Community Assessment, that the Bureau asked to be included in there. *It was their purview, their area, not ours at all.*¹⁰

A report drafted by HPSCI in 2017, and recently declassified, shows Brennan's testimony to be false.¹¹ According to the report, the ICA included supporting evidence for the ICA's false claim that Russia "aspired" to help President Trump win the election.¹² The report directed the reader to review "Annex A" for "additional reporting from an FBI Source on Russian influence efforts."¹³ Annex A, which was only included in the highest classified version of the ICA, was a two-page summary of the Steele dossier along with "some analysis that struggled to imply that some dossier findings might have been corroborated by intelligence."¹⁴ The CIA officer who served as the lead author of the ICA told HPSCI that he drafted Annex A "in coordination with [the] FBI."¹⁵

Ultimately, according to documents declassified by the Trump Administration, the decision to incorporate information from the Steele dossier in the ICA "was jointly made by the Directors of CIA and FBI[.]"¹⁶ A senior FBI analyst confirmed this fact, telling HPSCI that, after debating for several days whether to include information from the dossier, "upper levels [at FBI and CIA] decided to put it in."¹⁷

Brennan's assertion that the CIA was not "involved at all" with the Steele dossier cannot be reconciled with the facts. As the newly declassified documents show, a CIA officer drafted the annex containing a summary of the dossier; Brennan made the ultimate decision, along with then-FBI Director James Comey, to include information from the dossier in the ICA; and, as discussed further below, Brennan overruled senior CIA officers who objected to the inclusion of the dossier material.

¹⁰ Brennan Interview, *supra* note 1, at 108 (emphasis added).

¹¹ See HPSCI Report, *supra* note 5.

¹² *Id.* at 23.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.* at 24.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 24-25 (brackets in original).

2. Brennan falsely testified when he told the Committee that the CIA opposed including the Steele dossier in the ICA.

Brennan testified that “the CIA was very much opposed to having any reference or inclusion of the Steele dossier in the Intelligence Community Assessment.”¹⁸ He testified:

Chairman Jordan. Who’d you learn [about the Steele dossier] from? How’d you learn about the dossier in December?

Mr. Brennan. I received a copy of it from the FBI when they were wanting to have a summary of that document . . . attached to the Intelligence Community Assessment that was done. This was before . . . we went to Trump Tower and briefed Donald Trump, when Jim Comey was going to talk to Donald Trump about the contents of that dossier.

*And the CIA was very much opposed to having any reference or inclusion of the Steele dossier in the Intelligence Community Assessment. And so they sent over a copy of the dossier to say that this was going to be separate from the rest of that assessment. And that’s when the CIA was given formal access to it.*¹⁹

This claim is contradicted by multiple sources that reveal Brennan’s support for including the dossier in the ICA. According to a CIA memorandum declassified by the Trump Administration, when two CIA mission center leaders confronted Brennan with “specific flaws” in the dossier, Brennan disregarded their concerns, “appear[ing] more swayed by the [d]ossier’s general conformity with existing theories than by legitimate tradecraft concerns.”²⁰ Brennan later “formalized his position in writing, stating that ‘my bottomline is that I believe that the information warrants inclusion in the report.’”²¹ Similarly, the HPSCI report notes that when senior CIA officers demanded that Brennan remove the Steele dossier from the ICA, Brennan “refused to remove it.”²² When the officers presented evidence of the dossier’s “many flaws,”

¹⁸ Brennan Interview, *supra* note 1, at 113.

¹⁹ *Id.* (emphasis added).

²⁰ Memorandum from Deputy Dir. for Analysis, CIA, to John Ratcliffe, Dir., CIA, at 5 (June 26, 2025), <https://www.cia.gov/static/Tradecraft-Review-2016-ICA-on-Election-Interference-062625.pdf>.

²¹ *Id.*

²² HPSCI Report, *supra* note 5, at 23-24.

Brennan responded, “Yes, but doesn’t it ring true?”²³ Ultimately, Brennan “had to order [the dossier] included over the objections of [CIA] professionals.”²⁴

As the newly declassified documents demonstrate, Brennan eagerly wanted to include information from the Steele dossier in the ICA, a fact Brennan himself documented in writing. This directly contradicts Brennan’s testimony that “the CIA was very much opposed to having any reference or inclusion of the Steele dossier in the [ICA]”²⁵ because as the Director of the CIA, Brennan spoke for the Agency.²⁶

3. Brennan also provided false testimony during a HPSCI hearing in 2017.

On May 23, 2017, Brennan testified before HPSCI at an open hearing titled “Russian Active Measures During the 2016 Election Campaign.”²⁷ During the hearing, Brennan falsely asserted that the Steele dossier “was not in any way used as a basis for the Intelligence Community assessment that was done.”²⁸ Although this statement was made beyond the five-year statute of limitations, it indicates a pattern of Brennan’s willingness to lie to Congress about the Steele dossier. Brennan testified:

Mr. Gowdy. Do you know if the Bureau ever relied on the Steele dossier as . . . part of any court filings, applications, petitions, pleadings?

Mr. Brennan. I have no awareness.

Mr. Gowdy. Did the CIA rely on it?

Mr. Brennan. No.

Mr. Gowdy. Why not?

Mr. Brennan. Because we . . . didn’t. It wasn’t part of the corpus of intelligence information that we had. *It was not in any way used as a basis for the Intelligence Community assessment that was done.* . . . [I]t was not.²⁹

²³ *Id.* at 24.

²⁴ *Id.* at 32.

²⁵ Brennan Interview, *supra* note 1, at 113.

²⁶ See David J. Barron, *From Takeover to Merger: Reforming Administrative Law in an Age of Agency Politicization*, 76 GEO. WASH. L. REV. 1095, 1141 (2008) (recognizing that agency heads “speak for the agency”).

²⁷ See *Russian Active Measures During the 2016 Election Campaign: Open Hearing Before the H. Perm. Select Comm. on Intel.*, 115th Cong. (2017).

²⁸ *Id.* at 69.

²⁹ *Id.* at 69 (emphasis added).

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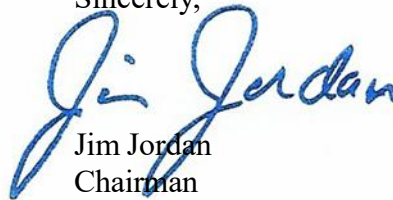
As discussed above, the HPSCI report and the CIA memorandum confirm not only that the Steele dossier was used as a basis for the ICA, but that Brennan insisted on its inclusion.³⁰ This stands in stark contrast with Brennan's testimony to HPSCI that the dossier was not used in drafting the ICA. Brennan's testimony is also contradicted by the ICA itself, which references the dossier in the main body of the assessment and summarizes material from the dossier in an annex.

* * *

In sum, Brennan's testimony before the Committee on May 11, 2023, was a brazen attempt to knowingly and willfully testify falsely and fictitiously to material facts. We therefore make this referral for the Department to examine whether any of Brennan's testimony warrants a charge for the violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member

³⁰ See Jed Rubenfeld, *Did Obama's National Security Team Break the Law?*, FREE PRESS (July 28, 2025) (describing Brennan's HPSCI testimony as a "falsehood" that is "compounded by the fact that the [newly declassified] files include documents showing that Brennan himself insisted on including the Steele dossier in the ICA, over the objections of senior CIA Russia analysts").