



House Intel Committee Votes to Release the FISA Memo. Now What?

The classified four-page FISA memo is now on the president's desk, and he has four more days to approve its release or object. Trump's approval is a foregone conclusion, since the White House publicly called on Congress to release the memo.

The House Intelligence Committee voted Monday evening to release the controversial — and much sought-after — four-page FISA memo detailing surveillance abuses to the public. The memo, which was circulated among members of the House in recent weeks, quickly became a lightning rod in the myriad investigations surrounding the ongoing Trump/Russia collusion probe led by Special Counsel Robert Mueller. Leading Republicans have said the memo will destroy the Mueller probe and land government officials in jail.



The memo has been described by Republicans in the House as “explosive,” “shocking,” “troubling,” and “alarming,” with Representative Scott Perry (R-Pa.) likening the behavior of surveillance hawks revealed in the memo to that of the Soviet KGB. The demand for the public release of the memo was immediate; within hours of it circulating among House members, leading Republicans began a social media campaign — using #ReleaseTheMemo to help spread the word — to demand that the memo immediately be made public.

Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) declared, “It is so alarming the American people have to see this.” Representative Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) said “the consequence of its release will be major changes in people currently working at the FBI and the Department of Justice” and that it would not “just end with firings,” adding, “I believe there are people who will go to jail.” Representative Scott Perry (R-Pa.) described his reaction to the contents of the memo by saying, “You think about, ‘is this happening in America or is this the KGB?’ That’s how alarming it is.”

As *The New American* [reported previously](#):

While Republican members of the House have come forward to both condemn the abuses detailed in the memo and demand that it be made public, their colleagues across the aisle have been silent on the subject. Gaetz made the point in his Fox News appearance that this is par for the course. “Every single Democrat on the Intelligence Committee voted against even allowing other members of Congress to see this information,” Gaetz said, adding that those same Democrats would — “of



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course” — vote against making the memo public.

And as James Donlon [reported on the response of Democrats to the #ReleaseTheMemo campaign](#), California Democrats Representative Adam Schiff and Senator Dianne Feinstein shot an [open letter](#) to the CEOs of Twitter and Facebook, complaining that the #ReleaseTheMemo topic “is in keeping with Moscow’s concerted, covert, and continuing campaign to manipulate American public opinion and erode trust in our law enforcement and intelligence institutions” and that it is the work of Russian bots and trolls. Donlon noted:

The embarrassing part: Shortly after the “Russian bots and trolls” accusation, an in-house [Twitter investigation](#) has shown that it was mostly real, concerned Americans, not Russian bots, who were re-tweeting the topic. Twitter — which was recently exposed for its [heavy-handed censorship tactics](#) and [political agenda](#) — isn’t even buying the Feinstein/Schiff line on this.

While this is embarrassing for Feinstein and Schiff, there is a deeper plot at play. The fact that the two Democrats tried to discredit the #ReleaseTheMemo topic — labeling it as Russian tampering and demanding that the social-media giant censor tweets using the hashtag — is deeply concerning, if not surprising. It also seems to have backfired on them.

And backfire it has. The social media campaign so hated (and apparently feared) by Democrats has succeeded and the House Intelligence Committee has voted to release the memo to the public.

Monday evening’s vote to release the memo followed the same pattern as the vote to allow the full House to see it: the vote was passed along strict party lines — as Gaetz predicted, every Democrat on the committee voted against it.

The memo is now on the president’s desk and he has four more days to approve its release or object. Trump’s approval is a foregone conclusion, since the White House publicly called on Congress to release the memo. It is even possible that the memo will hold a prominent role in the president’s State of the Union address tonight. We shall see.

In fact, Gaetz — having been a part of the successful #ReleaseTheMemo campaign — is using Twitter to call “for President Trump to #ReleaseTheMemo tonight during the State of the Union, so the American people can finally know the truth.”

Another Gaetz prediction (“major changes in people currently working at the FBI and the Department of Justice”) appears to have come to pass — albeit early. Ahead of the memo’s public release, Deputy FBI Director Andrew McCabe — who is reportedly mentioned in the memo and is already the subject of at least one Department of Justice investigation — has resigned. With the fallout beginning even before the release, one can only imagine what the next few weeks has in store for those involved.



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