

liable if they have committed harassment.

So I want to commend Senators KLOBUCHAR and BLUNT, who worked with many Members, including Senators GILLIBRAND, MURRAY, MCCASKILL, FEINSTEIN, HARRIS, and CORTEZ MASTO, for putting this together. I also thank my colleague, the majority leader. He and I were involved and are both co-sponsors of this legislation. It is an example, again, of the growing sprouts of bipartisanship coming forward in this body. I hope we can pass it quickly, with overwhelming, if not unanimous, support.

#### RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on another matter, this morning, with increasing desperation, President Trump tweeted several inaccuracies about the special counsel's investigation. No one should take the bait. I doubt very few who are looking at this in a non-partisan way will.

The recent demands from President Trump and his allies are just another part of a shameful campaign of harassment, intimidation, and obstruction of the Russia probe. It is all too clear that President Trump and his allies want to change the subject away from the duly constituted investigation into Russia meddling in the 2016 election and toward another fabricated scandal.

It began with conspiracies cooked up by Representative NUNES from "deep state" leaks to unmasking requests, claims of phone taps at Trump Tower, Uranium One, NUNES's midnight run to the White House, and the infamous Nunes memo. Now House conservatives, with the aid of the White House, seem to have successfully badgered DOJ officials into giving them a briefing on sources and methods of an FBI investigation. That is unprecedented and so very wrong.

Everyone knows what they are doing. They are hunting desperately for any scrap of information or innuendo that might help them sully the investigation or provide them a sneak peek at any evidence the FBI may have against the Trump campaign. If they have to distort and spread falsehoods about what is revealed in any meeting, they will, and for the President of the United States to pressure the Justice Department to reveal details and documents pertaining to an active investigation of the President's campaign for the purpose of denigrating it is a gross and unprecedented abuse of power, unlike any we have seen in a very long time. That is why so many people don't trust this President.

The only thing more outrageous than this meeting occurring at all is the fact that it is partisan. It is crystal clear that Representative NUNES intends to interfere with the investigation. He is not a down-the-middle investigator looking for truth. Everyone has seen that. NUNES gave up any pretense of objectivity long ago in that ridiculous,

late-night charade to the White House. Shamefully, someone I respect and someone I like, Speaker RYAN, is allowing this to happen. It will forever be a blot on his record. He can't be so afraid of the hard right and the President that he would allow this kind of "banana republic" behavior to go forward, and that is what NUNES is doing.

Regrettably, a few of my Senate colleagues seem to be allowing it to happen as well. Yesterday, I saw that a few of my friends on the other side sent a letter requesting to attend the meeting and supporting it but making no mention of the fact that not a single Democrat was invited.

My Republican friends know we have a process for dealing with the highly sensitive information of this type. It is called the Gang of 8. It is bipartisan. It has worked well. Any meeting between the Justice Department and Capitol Hill about such information should only be attended by Members of the Gang of 8.

So this morning, Leader PELOSI and I are sending a letter to Attorney General Rosenstein and Director Wray to request they reconsider holding the meeting at all and, if they move forward, to do so in a bipartisan fashion with the Gang of 8. If the meeting goes forward as planned right now—only partisan, only the worst actors on the House side in the room—no one should trust anything they say coming out of that meeting. It will be a sham. It will be a sham.

In our letter, we remind Attorney General Rosenstein and Director Wray they have a higher responsibility. I know they are being pushed around by the White House and by the White House's puppets like Congressman NUNES, but they must resist for the grand tradition of impartial justice under the law that has been in the veins of this country, in the bones of this country since 1789. To let this happen is disgraceful, and the blame really falls on the President and his puppets like, unfortunately, Chairman NUNES and some of the others who seem to be going along with him.

One other thing I might say though that I think should give Americans some solace is, I do not believe for one second that Special Counsel Mueller will be deterred. All this sideshow, all this attempt to discredit him and his investigation with all kinds of frivolous, silly, and often false statements and activities will not deter Mueller. The American people have the utmost confidence in him. He is a strong man. He is a quiet man. He happens to be a Republican appointed by the President's own appointees—hardly some nefarious representative who came out of nowhere from the deep state.

Mueller is going to go right ahead and see this investigation through to its natural conclusion. He will follow the facts where they lead. Americans will have confidence that if he finds something, it is real and, if he doesn't, he is not whitewashing a thing. That is

how he has gone about the investigation so far. It has resulted in dozens of indictments, several guilty pleas of top Trump campaign officials. When the President derogates Mueller and the investigation, he doesn't speak of any facts or knowledge; it is just wild allegations of something thrashing about, maybe because he realizes there might be something there. Who knows?

Special Counsel Mueller is a serious, quiet, diligent man, a lifelong Republican, a dedicated marine, universally respected. The American people can be assured that his investigation will not be blown off course by this hurricane of rightwing lies and intimidation coming from the President and his minions.

One final point on this topic, with several of his recent claims, it is clear President Trump lacks self-awareness. President Trump continues to peddle the myth that a deep state bias against his Presidency is driving the Russia probe, despite the fact that an active FBI investigation into his campaign was kept secret during his election while his opponent's was made public. If there was a deep state trying to hurt someone, they did a lot more to hurt Hillary Clinton than Donald Trump during the campaign. Everyone knows that. If the deep state were truly out to get President Trump, they would have made the active FBI investigation into his campaign's shady dealings with Russia a matter for the public record while he was running. This same lack of awareness—maybe hypocrisy—is apparent when the President reportedly uses an unsecured cell phone for some of his communications. Can you believe that after all the hay Donald Trump and his allies made about Secretary Clinton's handling of sensitive information, that the President—once in office—uses an unsecured cell phone, despite the fact that so many around him have told him that might be dangerous? It is bad for our national security, and his double standard is nothing short of outrageous.

#### GAS PRICES

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, Mr. President, gas prices. Few things matter more to the average consumer than the price of a gallon of gasoline. When gas prices go through the roof, it eats away at a family's income, leaving less to cover the cost of anything else—groceries, medicine, tuition, a nice summer vacation, which families cherish. Recent data suggests that gas prices are about to climb even higher this summer, and experts suggest that actions and inactions on the part of the Trump administration are a major piece of that story.

According to energy analysts and experts, President Trump's decision to pull out of the Iran deal led to higher oil prices. OPEC has decided to cut production, also raising prices. Even though President Trump tweeted that OPEC's decision "will not be accepted," the American people are still