



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RICK SCOTT
Governor

KEN DETZNER
Secretary of State

August 10, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen M. Nielsen, Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Christopher Wray, Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
FBI Headquarters
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

Dear Secretary Nielsen and Director Wray:

The Florida Department of State values our strong partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Florida's 67 locally elected county Supervisors of Elections. Since 2016, the unprecedented level of support in securing our elections that has been provided to states by your agencies is deeply appreciated. I firmly believe that the constant communication and information sharing among federal, state and local partners is key to thwarting any potential cyber threats and maintaining fair and accurate elections.

State and local election officials have taken significant steps and invested millions of dollars to ensure the security and integrity of Florida's elections. This includes upgrading hardware, software and firewalls, distributing more than \$14.5 million in election security grants to counties, hiring cyber security specialists, and providing \$1.9 million to counties to install a network monitoring security solution that provides automated alerts about potential threats.

The Department and locally elected Supervisors of Elections take cybersecurity very seriously and any information we receive about threats to Florida's elections we act upon and work to immediately prevent and mitigate those threats.

Earlier this week, Senator Bill Nelson made some very concerning and unsubstantiated comments that "Russians are in Florida's elections records" and that they have "already penetrated certain counties in the state and they now have free rein to move about." Immediately upon hearing these comments, the Department reached out to your agencies to Secretary Nielsen and Director Wray

August 10, 2018
Page Two

verify these claims. Given our strong partnership, we were able to immediately get in touch with the appropriate contacts within your agencies and were advised that neither DHS or the FBI has any information that corroborates Senator Nelson's statements. The Department also has no evidence to support these claims.

In his comments, Senator Nelson stated that "we were requested by the chairman and vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee to let Supervisors of Elections in Florida know that Russians are in their records." The Department sent a letter to Senator Richard Burr, the Chairman of the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, urging the committee to share any relevant, classified information with state and local election officials that validates Senator Nelson's comments. The Department received a swift response from Senator Burr that did not confirm Senator Nelson's statements. Senator Burr advised us to continue engaging with DHS and the FBI as "any briefings or notifications about ongoing threats would, rightfully, come from those agencies."

As Senator Burr recommended, I am asking today that we continue our collaborative partnership in keeping Florida's elections secure. In order to help alleviate the concerns of Florida voters and Supervisors of Elections in our state, I also ask that DHS provide our office with an official response that confirms your previous statement that you "have not seen any new compromises by Russian actors of election infrastructure" and reaffirms your commitment to sharing any future knowledge of potential threats to Florida's voting systems.

With Floridians already casting vote-by-mail ballots and early voting set to begin as early as Monday in some counties, we respectfully request a written response no later than Monday, August 13.

To the best of our knowledge and the knowledge of our federal partners, Florida's voting systems and elections databases remain secure and there has been no intrusion of the Florida Voter Registration System and no reported breaches from locally elected Supervisors of Elections. The Department will continue to work every single day with DHS, the FBI, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and locally elected Supervisors of Elections to ensure that voter information is safe, every vote is counted and there is zero fraud.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,



Ken Detzner
Florida Secretary of State

CC: The Honorable Richard Burr, Chairman, U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
Richard Swearingen, Commissioner, Florida Department of Law Enforcement
The Honorable Paul Lux, President, Florida State Association of Supervisor of Elections, Inc.