

**TO: Interested Parties**  
**FROM: Geoff Garin**  
**DATE: November 27, 2018**  
**RE: New Survey Findings on the Mueller Investigation**

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*This memorandum outlines the key findings from a survey among a representative national cross section of 1,200 respondents who voted in either the 2016 or 2018 general elections. The interviews were conducted November 8 to 12, 2018. The party identification of the sample is 45% Democrat, 40% Republican, and 15% completely independent. Among the 96% who say they voted in 2016, 49% say they voted for Hillary Clinton, 46% say they voted for Donald Trump, and 5% say they voted for another candidate.*

**1. Three out of four voters want the new attorney general to let Robert Mueller complete his investigation, and two out of three voters favor making the confirmation of a new attorney general contingent on a commitment to letting Mueller finish his work.**

Overall, 76% of voters say the new attorney general should allow Robert Mueller to complete his investigation, while only 24% say the new attorney general should fire Robert Mueller and terminate his investigation before it is completed.

Majorities of Democrats (94%), independents (78%), and Republicans (55%) say that Mueller should be allowed to complete his investigation.

In this regard:

- 83% of voters, including 68% of Republicans, agree that *"it would be an abuse of power for Donald Trump to try to stop an ongoing investigation of him and his campaign because no one is above the law, not even the president."* Fifty-nine percent **strongly** agree.
- 82% of voters, including 66% of Republicans, agree that *"Robert Mueller should be allowed to finish his investigation and follow the facts wherever they lead, because everyone must abide by the rule of law, even the president."* Fifty-eight percent **strongly** agree.

Sixty-five percent of voters say they would have a favorable reaction if their senators said they would vote against confirming any new attorney general appointed by President Trump unless the nominee commits to allowing Robert Mueller to complete his investigation.

**2. There is strong support for the principle that Donald Trump should not be allowed to pick the person who investigates him, and in this regard a majority of voters say Matthew Whitaker should not take part in overseeing the Mueller investigation.**

Respondents were given the following background information: *President Trump has appointed Matthew Whitaker to be acting attorney general, until a permanent attorney general can be put in place. Mr. Whitaker is a Trump loyalist who has spoken out against letting the Mueller investigation examine members of the Trump family regarding their financial dealings with Russia. He also has spoken about how a new attorney general might cut the budget of the Mueller investigation "so low that the investigation grinds to a halt."*

With this background, only 29% say Whitaker should be in charge of overseeing the Mueller investigation as the acting attorney general, while 54% say he should not take part in overseeing the investigation and should instead allow an independent Justice Department official to oversee it.

Voters across party lines agree that *"President Trump should not be allowed to pick the person who investigates him, because the investigation needs to be independent and not controlled by the person who is being investigated."* Fully 81% concur with this view, including 69% of Republicans; 58% of all voters **strongly** agree.

**3. Republican voters who agree with President Trump that the Mueller investigation is biased against him nevertheless want Trump and his associates to be held accountable if the Mueller investigation finds evidence of crimes.**

Seventy-eight percent of Republican voters say the Mueller investigation is "a biased and partisan effort to attack Donald Trump" (while 92% of Democratic voters say it is "a fair and impartial effort to get at the facts"). But as noted, 55% of Republicans believe Mueller should be allowed to complete his investigation; indeed, 48% of those who say the Mueller investigation is biased and partisan favor letting Mueller finish his work. Additionally, 63% of those who say the Mueller investigation is biased and partisan agree "Mueller should be allowed to finish his investigation and follow the facts wherever they lead, because everyone must abide by the rule of law, even the president."

These findings, along with other results, suggest *there is a good chance that at the end of the day accountability for wrongdoing will supersede process arguments among Republican voters*. Of special note in this regard is that 81% of all voters, including 62% of Republicans and 60% of those who say the Mueller investigation is biased, say that if the Mueller investigation results in additional criminal indictments of people who were part of the Trump campaign or personally close to President Trump, those indictments should be prosecuted in the courts and should not be dropped or dismissed.

**4. There is almost universal support for making the report of the Mueller investigation public once it is completed, and there is broad opposition to allowing President Trump to decide on his own to withhold certain portions of the report.**

Nationally, 90% of voters, including 82% of Republicans, say Robert Mueller's report on the findings of his investigation should be made public and available for the average person.

Seventy-four percent of voters, including half of Republicans, say President Trump should not be allowed to decide on his own to withhold certain portions of the report from the public. By 73% to 27%, voters say they would trust a bipartisan committee of Congress more than the Trump administration to determine which portions of the Mueller report should be made public.

Sixty-eight percent of voters say they would have a favorable reaction if their senator would vote against confirming any new attorney general appointed by President Trump unless he or she commits to making the Mueller investigation report public.

Majorities of voters find two reasons for making the report public to be very convincing:

- *"Conspiracy, stolen e-mails, obstruction of justice, and money laundering all are serious crimes, and if a president was involved in any of these crimes the public has a right to know."*
- *"American taxpayers paid tens of millions of dollars for this investigation and have to right to know what it found."*

**5. A majority of voters, including a significant share of Republicans, would consider a variety of potential findings of the Mueller investigation to be highly concerning.**

Voters were asked how concerned they would be if the Mueller investigation found significant evidence for each of the following:

	<b><u>Total Concerned</u></b>
As president, Donald Trump tried to obstruct law enforcement officials, including the FBI, from investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election and possible collusion by the Trump campaign	71
Russia interfered in the 2016 election with the goal of helping Donald Trump	69
Members of the Trump campaign asked for or knowingly received help from Russians in the 2016 election	70
Members of the Trump family engaged in illegal activities with Russians prior to the 2016 campaign, such as money laundering	70
Donald Trump was personally aware of Russian involvement in helping his campaign in the 2016 election	68
Donald Trump or his close advisors had advance knowledge that stolen e-mails of Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman would be publicly released to benefit the Trump campaign	62

The greatest causes for concern among Republican voters would be if members of the Trump family engaged in illegal activities with the Russians prior to the 2016 campaign (46%) and if Donald Trump tried to obstruct law enforcement officials from investigating Russian interference and potential collusion by the Trump campaign during the 2016 election (45%).

**6. The case for why the Mueller investigation is necessary and legitimate outweighs President Trump's argument that the Mueller investigation is illegitimate because it "was started under false pretenses." In this regard, the large majority of Americans want those found to have broken the law to be held accountable by Congress and the courts.**

This is the most persuasive case in support of the Mueller investigation:

*Far from a witch hunt, Mueller's investigation has already resulted in seven guilty pleas, including President Trump's campaign chairman, deputy campaign manager, personal lawyer, and national security advisor. The Mueller investigation also has led to 30 more criminal indictments, including several Russian intelligence officers and hackers. With this track record, Mueller must be allowed to continue following the facts, wherever they lead. An independent investigation will help determine whether other serious crimes were committed, so*

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*anyone who may have broken our laws can be held accountable by Congress and through the courts (67% very or fairly convincing).*

After hearing arguments on both sides, including a pro-Trump statement that the Mueller investigation was started under false pretenses and has been a “rigged investigation,” 71% of voters come down on the side that the Mueller investigation is legitimate and necessary.

	All Voters
The Mueller investigation is not legitimate. It should be shut down immediately and its findings should be dismissed by Congress and the courts .....	29
The Mueller investigation is legitimate and necessary. The Mueller investigation should follow the facts wherever they lead, and people who are found to have broken the law should be held accountable by Congress and the courts .....	71

It is worth noting in this context that voters, including Republicans, reject the contention that “collusion is not a crime.”

	All Voters
Collusion is not a crime because the First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and campaigns can talk about opposition research with whoever they want.....	28
The First Amendment does not give anyone the right to break the law, and collusion with a foreign power to elect a candidate is a clear violation of several different laws .....	72