

Wisconsin members of congress seek more info on Trump intelligence disclosure

Posted on Wednesday, May 17, 2017

U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher is calling on the White House to give a “thorough account” of a meeting President Trump held with Russian officials where he was reported to have disclosed highly classified information.

Gallagher, a Green Bay Republican and former Marine, said in a series of tweets Tuesday while Trump has the authority to disclose classified information, there’s “a separate question of whether he should.” He also called on the White House to offer a transcript of that meeting with congressional intelligence committees.

“Our allies and partners must have the utmost confidence that sensitive information they share with us will not be disclosed,” he said in one tweet.

Gallagher’s tweets came after a Washington Post report showed Trump revealed highly classified information to the Russian officials. The U.S. reportedly had not been given permission to share the information with Russia, which had been provided by “a U.S. partner,” according to the Washington Post. The New York Times reported Tuesday that information came from Israel.

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Trump said on Twitter this morning he has the “absolute right” to share any information with Russia and that he wants the country to “greatly step up their fight against ISIS & terrorism.”

But Gallagher said it’s “dangerous to believe that Russia can be a reliable counterterrorism partner.”

“The sooner we abandon this fantasy and work with our allies to oppose the Russian-Iranian axis throughout the Middle East, the better,” he said.

See Gallagher’s tweets:

<https://twitter.com/RepGallagher>

Other Republicans didn’t provide lengthy comments on the issue, though they called on the White House to provide more information.

A spokesman for House Speaker Paul Ryan said after the story broke yesterday that the Janesville Republican “hopes for a full explanation of the facts from the administration” and that “we have no way to know what was said, but protecting our nation’s secrets is paramount.”

Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, is “looking forward to Congress being briefed on the matter,” a spokeswoman said.

A spokeswoman for U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, said he “wasn’t privy to the conversation and doesn’t know what was said, but believes the President should work with the intelligence committees to ensure that Congress is fully briefed on what was shared and why.”

And U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson’s office flagged a short interview he did with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. The Oshkosh Republican told the newspaper if “classified information was revealed that revealed sources and is harmful to our intelligence collection activities, that’s concerning.”

Dems slammed the news, with U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, saying the meeting threatened “our partnerships with allies in the fight against ISIS and our ability to protect the homeland against terrorism.”

Eric Harris, a spokesman for U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, said the Milwaukee Dem is worried about the implications of Trump sharing classified information, including the “potential to compromise our intelligence gathering capabilities and possibly stymie our ongoing efforts to destroy ISIS through international cooperation.”

Harris added that “with every passing day” the need for an “independent, bipartisan commission to investigate Russia’s influence over this administration becomes ever more urgent.”

And U.S. Reps. Mark Pocan and Ron Kind both said they agreed with Gallagher that the Trump administration should brief Congress' intelligence committees. Kind, D-La Crosse, said lawmakers on those committees need to know "the full nature of the information revealed and any damage it may cause."

Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, also said lawmakers "immediately need a special prosecutor appointed, to get to the bottom" of the investigation into ties between Trump's presidential campaign and Russia.