

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Sens. Johnson, Grassley demand explanation for FBI's reliance on debunked anti-Trump dossier sub-source who sought to traffic classified information

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) and U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) sent a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray demanding an explanation for why Igor Danchenko, an anti-Trump dossier sub-source who sought to traffic classified information, was placed on payroll and paid by the taxpayer to assist in the federal government's flawed investigation into President Trump.

Before Danchenko became the dossier's primary sub-source, the FBI considered him a counterintelligence threat. Danchenko's background includes interactions with Russian intelligence services and offers to procure and sell U.S. government secrets.

"This extraordinary fact pattern requires additional information from the Justice Department and FBI relating to why Danchenko was placed on the payroll and paid by the taxpayer to assist in the federal government's flawed investigation into President Trump," **the senators wrote.**

Since 2016, Sens. Johnson, Grassley and others have raised a number of concerns about Crossfire Hurricane given its reliance on unverified – and now debunked –

allegations from dubious sources who were paid by the Hillary Clinton Campaign and Democratic National Committee.

Johnson and Grassley are seeking all FBI and Justice Department records related to government payments to Danchenko, the counterintelligence concerns he posed and the FBI's decision to rely on him.

Read more about the letter in [Fox News](#).

The full text of the letter can be found [here](#) and below.

September 21, 2022

The Honorable Merrick Garland

Attorney General

Department of Justice

The Honorable Christopher Wray

Director

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Dear Attorney General Garland and Director Wray:

On September 2, 2022, Special Counsel John Durham filed a motion in limine with respect to the Department of Justice's (DOJ) case against Igor Danchenko, Christopher Steele's primary sub-source, for lying to federal investigators.^[1] In that motion, Special Counsel Durham noted that, "[i]n March 2017, the [Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)] signed [Danchenko] up as a paid confidential human source of the FBI. The FBI terminated its source relationship with the defendant in October 2020."^[2]

As you are aware, in May 2009, the FBI opened a preliminary investigation into Danchenko based on his reported attempts to facilitate payment for classified information. Specifically, a declassified summary of the investigation noted that Danchenko approached several individuals at a work-related event in 2008 and "indicated that if the two individuals at the table 'did get a job in the government

and had access to classified information' and 'wanted to make a little extra money,'" Danchenko knew individuals who they could speak to.^[3] The summary further stated that an individual interviewed by the FBI expressed the possibility that Danchenko could be "a Russian spy."^[4]

The preliminary investigation then proceeded to a full investigation because Danchenko was identified as an associate of two FBI counterintelligence subjects.^[5] The FBI also determined that Danchenko had contact in 2006 with the Russian Embassy and known Russian intelligence officers.^[6] The FBI also learned that during the course of Danchenko's contacts with Russian intelligence officers, he appeared to be involved in the transmission of Russian documents at the request of a Russian Intelligence Officer.^[7]

In December 2016, the FBI's Crossfire Hurricane team identified Danchenko as Steele's primary sub-source and, according to the FBI, "became familiar with the 2009 investigation."^[8] The FBI, even in light of the extensive derogatory information attached to Danchenko, proceeded to pay him as a confidential human source three months later from March 2017 to October 2020 as part of Crossfire Hurricane. Therefore, while we were investigating the Justice Department's and FBI's misconduct with respect to Crossfire Hurricane, you maintained him on the government's payroll.

This extraordinary fact pattern requires additional information from the Justice Department and FBI relating to why Danchenko was placed on the payroll and paid by the taxpayer to assist in the federal government's flawed investigation into President Trump.

Accordingly, no later than October 22, 2022, please provide all records relating to government payments made to Danchenko, the counterintelligence investigation into him and his later hiring.^[9]

Sincerely,