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One Hundred Sixteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

December 10, 2020

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On September 8, we wrote to you to express our deep concern over the August 20, 2020 poisoning of leading Russian political activist Alexey Navalny with a Novichok chemical nerve agent. In that letter, we formally requested that the executive branch investigate whether Russia has used chemical weapons in violation of international law or has used lethal chemical weapons against its own nationals.

Pursuant to Section 306 of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991 (22 USC 5604) (“the CBW Act”), that request triggered a required 60-day evaluation period. That 60-day period has now concluded, but we have yet to receive the required determination from the executive branch. Therefore, we urge you to share immediately with Congress the results of the investigation triggered by our initial letter.

If the Russian government is once again determined to have used a chemical weapon against one of its own nationals, then it must be held fully accountable, including through the imposition of additional sanctions.

We commend the swift response by the European Union and the United Kingdom to sanction six top Russian officials and a state scientific research center accused of deploying the banned nerve agent. We encourage the Administration to consider imposing similar sanctions if its investigation also determined that such a brazen attack could not have been carried out without the involvement of the Putin regime’s security services.

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Moreover, with the European Union's recent adoption of a human rights sanctions regime similar to the U.S. Global Magnitsky Act, the United States, European Union, United Kingdom, and Canada are now better positioned than ever to harmonize our sanctions regimes to ensure the greatest collective impact.

It is imperative that the CBW Act is appropriately implemented and that the executive branch submits its findings to Congress on the attack on Mr. Navalny. Those responsible for the use of an illegal nerve agent must be held to full account and understand that the free world will not allow them to act with impunity.

Sincerely,



ELIOT L. ENGEL
Chairman



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Ranking Member