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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

A. JAY KHOSLA, STAFF DIRECTOR
JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

February 2, 2018

Wilson H. Phillips, Jr.
Treasurer
National Rifle Association of America
11250 Waples Mill Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

To Mr. Wilson H. Phillips, Jr.,

The Senate Finance Committee is charged with administration of matters relating to taxation, including oversight of tax exempt organizations. I write to you today as the committee's ranking member with concerns about recent news reports indicating that your organization could have been used by Russian individuals and/or entities to funnel foreign contributions into the 2016 election. According to these news reports, the FBI is investigating whether Alexander Torshin, a Russian official with close ties to President Vladimir Putin—who has reported links to money laundering—inappropriately and illegally influenced our election.¹

I am specifically troubled by the possibility that Russian-backed shell companies or intermediaries may have circumvented laws designed to prohibit foreign meddling in our elections by abusing the rules governing 501(c)(4) tax exempt organizations. To aid in my oversight responsibilities, please provide, at a minimum, preliminary responses to the following questions no later than February 16, 2018:

- a) Please identify any remuneration, transaction, or contribution that involved any of the 501(c)(4) entities associated with your organization and any entity or individual associated with any Russian official, Russian national, or Russian business interest, including their agents, representatives, or intermediaries.
- b) Please identify any policies or procedures your organization has implemented to ensure that funds from foreign sources are not used to influence U.S. elections.
- c) Please provide all documents related to any remuneration, transaction, or contribution in (a) including but not limited to any account statements, deposit slips, cancelled checks, credit card statements, wire transfer slips, real estate ownership documentation and associated securitized debt.

**No
Response.**

**Partial
Response.
(See yellow
highlight on
NRA
response.)**

d) Please identify any documents under (c) which have already been turned over to United States authorities.

If you have any questions please contact Committee staff at (202) 224-4515. Thank you for your swift attention to this matter.

**No
Response.**

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

¹ *FBI Investigating Whether Russian Money Went To NRA To Help Trump*; McClatchy, January 18, 2018; www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/national/article195231139.html

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
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**From the Desk of
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NRA

February 15, 2018

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Hon Ron Wyden
FEB 22 2018

Dear Senator Wyden:

I am responding to your February 2, 2018 letter to Wilson H. Phillips, Jr., Treasurer of the National Rifle Association of America, requesting documentation related to financial transactions between the NRA and individuals or entities associated with the Russian Federation.

Your inquiry appears to be based on a recent news article suggesting that one Russian official, Alexander Torshin, is under investigation by the FBI with respect to his alleged efforts to channel election-related funding to the NRA. As the article itself makes clear (and as the author of the article has made clear to counsel for the NRA), the article refers to an investigation of Mr. Torshin—not of the NRA. There has been no contact between the FBI and the NRA.

As a longstanding policy to comply with federal election law, the NRA and its related entities do not accept funds from foreign persons or entities in connection with United States elections.

The vast majority of NRA donations come from millions of small individual donors. Contributions are carefully monitored in order to comply with Internal Revenue Service and Federal Election Commission regulations. Significant contributions from unknown entities are vetted to ensure the legitimacy of donors.

Finally, NRA political decisions are made by NRA officers and executive staff, all of whom are United States citizens. No foreign nationals are consulted in any way on these decisions.

I hope this response is helpful.

Sincerely,

John C. Frazer
Secretary and General Counsel

cc: The Hon. Chuck Grassley