



## **For Immediate Release**

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# **Oversight Delayed is Accountability Denied: Levin Center at Wayne Law Urges SCOTUS to Reject Effort to Stay Release to Congress of Mueller Inquiry Grand Jury Materials**

## **STATEMENT OF LEVIN CENTER DIRECTOR JIM TOWNSEND**

Detroit: May 8, 2020 – Yesterday, the U.S. Department of Justice continued its year-long effort to prevent Congress from reviewing grand jury materials related to a criminal investigation of Russian interference with the 2016 presidential election. The grand jury was convened by Special Counsel Robert Mueller and concluded its work long ago. Since then, Congress has sought to review certain grand jury materials to assist its consideration of possible impeachment proceedings against the President.

Congress first directed its request for the materials to DOJ, then followed with a subpoena. When DOJ refused to produce them, Congress filed an application with the D.C. District Court, which is the true custodian of the grand jury materials. The chief judge ruled that the grand jury materials should be turned over to Congress; the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, in a 2-1 decision, agreed. The appeals court also rejected a request by DOJ to stay production of the grand jury materials pending an appeal to the Supreme Court. DOJ has now asked the Supreme Court itself to stay the court order to turn over the records.

This case continues this Administration's efforts to bulldoze Congress' right to information and defy the checks and balances created by the Constitution. The courts have so far refused to go along, instead reaffirming that no one is above the law, not even a president with disdain for the role of Congress. If the Supreme Court grants this stay, it will facilitate this Administration's stonewalling of Congress by granting it yet more time to run out the clock on the House Judiciary Committee's document request. Oversight delayed is accountability denied.

In these difficult times, the Levin Center stands with Congress in its persistent efforts to meet its oversight responsibilities. We hope the Supreme Court denies the stay and reaffirms the lower courts' decision to grant Congress access to the grand jury materials that it has every right to review.

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