

FBI Director to Testify on Russia Investigation

FBI Director James Comey's seat got a little bit hotter Wednesday when Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) informed him he was putting a hold on the confirmation of a deputy attorney general until the director reported to Congress on the bureau's investigation of claims Russia attempted to interfere in the election.

The committee held a confirmation hearing for Rod Rosenstein, who has been picked to be the DOJ's No. 2, last week. But at a press gaggle Tuesday night, Grassley said he informed the administration he won't allow a confirmation vote out of committee until he hears from Comey.

Wednesday afternoon, the FBI announced that Comey would testify before the House Intelligence Committee next week. Separately, his spokesman said, he will brief both Grassley and the Judiciary Committee's ranking Democrat, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.).

This goes beyond whether or not there's proof of President Donald Trump's accusations that Obama administration officials wiretapped Trump Tower during the 2016 election. House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) said there is evidence criminal activity took place in revealing former National Security Adviser Mike Flynn's communications with the Russian ambassador.

He has ordered all of the agencies that comprise the Intelligence Community to inform him of whether or not they eavesdropped on any Trump or Clinton campaign personnel, and if they illegally "unmasked" any of them by leaking the details of their communications. They have until Friday to answer.

"The committee is concerned that [U.S. persons'] identifiable information may have been mishandled in violation of approved minimization and dissemination procedures," Nunes and Intelligence Committee ranking Democrat Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) wrote in a letter to the FBI, CIA and NSA. {eoa}