

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY

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Casey: Tillerson Nomination to Lead State Department Would Raise Serious Questions

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), a member of the National Security Working Group and former Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs, released a statement following reports that President-elect Donald Trump will nominate the Chief Executive of ExxonMobil, Rex Tillerson, as Secretary of State.

“The reports that President-elect Trump will nominate Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State, coupled with the recent revelation by the Washington Post that the CIA believes that the Russian government interfered in our election to aid Mr. Trump raise serious questions about whether the incoming Administration will adequately stand up to Russia’s aggression. Mr. Tillerson, the Chief Executive of ExxonMobil, has been described as having “close ties” to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Mr. Tillerson signed an energy agreement worth \$500 billion with Russia in 2011 and was awarded one of Russia’s highest honors in 2012, the Order of Friendship decoration. After Russia illegally invaded a sovereign country, Ukraine, in 2014 and annexed Crimea, Mr. Tillerson argued against the international sanctions that held Russia accountable. Additionally, according to reports, Mr. Tillerson has extensive investments throughout the world and will need to explain how, as Secretary of State, he would divest himself from these investments in order to remove conflicts of interest.

President-elect Trump’s fascination with Mr. Putin, Mr. Tillerson’s unusual relationship with Mr. Putin and the revelations about Russia’s attempt to influence the election in favor of President-elect Trump raise unprecedented and profound questions that must be addressed immediately.

The Russian Federation, under President Putin’s leadership, has violated the sovereignty of Ukraine and Georgia in addition to committing war crimes in Syria. President-elect Trump must stand up to Vladimir Putin and nominating Mr. Tillerson as Secretary of State raises serious doubts about whether President-elect Trump will stand up for America’s interests.”

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