

**The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman**

**The Honorable Dick Durbin, Ranking Member**

**United States Senate, Committee on the Judiciary**

**Washington D.C. 20510**

**Re: Nomination of Kash Patel for FBI Director**

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin,

Kash Patel is a great public servant who reveres and respects our military, law enforcement and veterans. I know. I have worked closely with him. In my service with Kash, he has always been committed to excellence in everything he does.

On Oct 31, 2020, while I was performing the duties as undersecretary of defense for policy and Kash was serving as the senior advisor to the president for counterterrorism, Kash operated within the chain of command by relaying a message from the state department to me which he believed to be true. I communicated that authority, along with several others previously confirmed, to the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and SOCOM commander, among others.

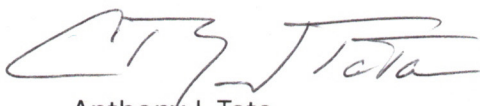
As my team and I simultaneously attempted to independently confirm that specific authority with the State Department, which was responsible for obtaining the clearance, I called the Chairman and discussed the status of all authorities. The Chairman recommended continuing with the launch of the team pending confirmation of the State Department authority because we could turn around the planes if we didn't confirm the clearance. Launching the planes too much later would put the darkness window in jeopardy, meaning the mission would have to be delayed 24 hours.

To delay by even a day would have risked the perishable intelligence we had on the hostage location. In essence, we launched believing we would hear from Secretary Pompeo about whether he, or his team, had in fact secured this clearance. It is unclear what the confusion at State was regarding this one authority, but what is clear is that Kash's focus on the special operators never wavered.

It's irresponsible to suggest that Kash's report "jeopardized" the mission when the Chairman elected to launch *knowing* the information required further validation. Had we not launched when we did, the operators would not have been in the air when the State Department finally confirmed the authority, and we could have lost the darkness window, forcing a 24-hour slip of the mission and perhaps losing actionable intelligence on the hostage.

Ultimately, we were all focused on mission success in a high-stakes environment where an American citizen's life was on the line. From my viewpoint, Kash played a critical role in that and many other successes during his tenure precisely because he cares so deeply about America, its national and domestic security, and her citizens.

Respectfully,



Anthony J. Tata

Brigadier General, U.S. Army (Retired)

Former PTDO Undersecretary of Defense for Policy