

Washington, DC (Oct. 20, 2012)—Today, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, issued a statement in response to reports that Committee Chairman Darrell Issa rushed to release sensitive documents before Monday's presidential debate that included information that may have endangered the lives of Libyans working with the United States and compromised the FBI investigation of those who attacked the U.S. diplomatic post in Benghazi.

"If these reports are accurate, Rep. Issa's actions are astonishingly reckless, a blatant violation of the rules of the House of Representatives, and another dangerous example of the way Republicans are placing partisan politics above the interests of our nation," said Cummings. "It would be an extremely grave consequence of Rep. Issa's actions if individuals helping our country are harmed and suspects in this attack are able to escape justice."

After the Committee's October 10, 2012, hearing was widely criticized for its toxic partisanship and failure to properly safeguard sensitive information, Cummings wrote a [letter](#) requesting that Issa hold a classified briefing for Committee Members and work carefully with the House Intelligence Committee to avoid exactly this type of security breach.

Issa failed to respond to this letter. As a result, the Committee has yet to receive a single classified briefing about the attack, and the Committee has not spoken with even one individual who was present in Libya on the day of the attack.

"There was absolutely no reason for Rep. Issa to do this other than an obviously partisan attempt to affect the upcoming presidential debate," Cummings said today. "He did not take even the most basic precautions of checking with security experts, intelligence officials, or his own Committee Members before he rushed to make these documents public."

On Friday, Cummings sent [a detailed letter](#) highlighting numerous omissions, inaccuracies, and distortions in a letter Issa sent to the President that selectively quoted from statements and documents while failing to include significant information that contradicted his partisan narrative.

Today, Cummings also expressed serious concern about statements made yesterday by Issa's

spokesman, who attempted to shift blame for Issa's own disclosures onto U.S. diplomatic personnel in Benghazi who were unable to fully secure diplomatic documents after they came under attack.

“Frankly, it disgusts me that Rep. Issa and his staff would blame our American diplomats for not being able to fully secure documents after the compound in Benghazi was hit with rocket propelled grenades and engulfed in flames, particularly when Rep. Issa just disclosed sensitive documents intentionally from the comfort of his office in Washington,” said Cummings.

In making these disclosures, Issa ignored extremely explicit warnings from the State Department in a [letter](#) on October 9, 2012 that the diplomatic cables and other documents obtained during his investigation contained “classified and other sensitive information, including information about the security of U.S. diplomatic missions overseas, foreign government information, and personal privacy information, the unauthorized release of which could cause damage to national security and foreign relations.”

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