



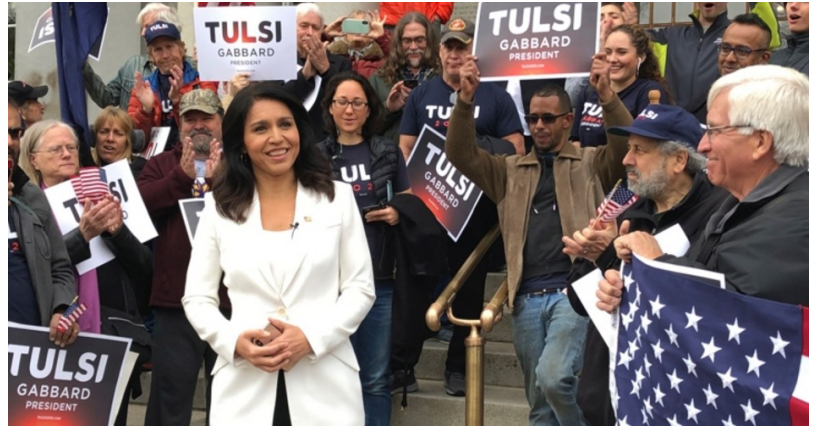
Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on November 12, 2019

## Clinton Did Smear Gabbard as Russian Asset. Retraction Won't Help the Hawaiian's Candidacy

Democrat presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard wants Hillary Clinton to retract the ridiculous claim that Gabbard is a Russian asset.

[Gabbard's attorney demanded](#) the retraction yesterday, but didn't threaten a lawsuit Gabbard can't win.

But even if Clinton does back down and admit that Gabbard's disagreement with America's foreign policy doesn't mean she is a Russian asset, a claim [Clinton's campaign made](#) in her race against President Trump in 2016, the retreat won't mean much.



The problem for the congresswoman from Hawaii? She scores embarrassing numbers in the [Real Clear Politics polling average](#) and has for some time, the Clinton charge regardless.

### What Clinton Said

Clinton called Gabbard the preferred candidate of the Russians during an interview with Democrat bigshot [David Plouffe](#) for his *Campaign HQ* podcast. Plouffe is a former Obama legman.

Plouffe said Trump's strategy for 2020 is to convince voters to cast their ballots against the Democrat candidate even if they don't like Trump, which prompted Clinton to speculate that Trump and the GOP will employ a two-part strategy, with part two involving Gabbard, whom Clinton didn't name:

### [Said Clinton:](#)

There's going to be two parts. And I think it's going to be the same as 2016. Don't vote for the other guy. You don't like me, don't vote for the other guy. Because the other guy's going to X, Y, and Z, or the other guy did such terrible things. And I'm going to show you in these flashing videos that appear and then disappear and they're on the Dark Web and nobody can find them. But you're gonna see them and you're gonna see that person doing these horrible things.

They're also going to do third party again. And I'm not making any predictions, but I think they've got their eye on somebody who's currently in the Democratic primary and are grooming her to be the third-party candidate. She's a favorite of the Russians. They have a bunch of sites and bots and other ways of supporting her so far, and that's assuming Jill Stein will give it up, which she might not, cause she's also a Russian asset. Yeah, she's a Russian asset. I mean totally.

And so, they know they can't win without a third-party candidate. And so, I don't know who it's going to be, but I will guarantee they will have a vigorous third-party challenge in the key states that they most need it.

A Clinton spokesman didn't help matters when asked about the remark. "If the nesting doll fits," [he said](#). "This is not some outlandish claim. This is reality. If the Russian propaganda machine, both their



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state media and their bot and troll operations, is backing a candidate aligned with their interests, that is just a reality, it is not speculation.”

In the *Wall Street Journal* on October 30, [Gabbard wrote](#) that Clinton claimed “I am being ‘groomed’ by the Russian government to undermine America.”

Clinton claims, with some justification, that she did not suggest that the Russians were “grooming” Gabbard, but instead that Republicans are. Gabbard’s piece in the *Journal* earned four Pinocchios from the *Washington Post’s* fact checker, [who backed](#) Clinton’s explanation.

Yesterday, her lawyer released his opinion.

“Your statement is defamatory, and we demand that you retract it immediately,” [Gabbard’s attorney](#) wrote.

As for the claim that Clinton did not say the Russians were grooming her, “it appears you may now be claiming that this statement is about Republicans (not Russians) grooming Gabbard,” the attorney continued. “But this makes no sense in light of what you actually said. After you made the statement linking Congresswoman Gabbard to the Russians, you (through your spokesman) doubled down on it with the Russian nesting dolls remark.”

And Gabbard says she will not mount a third-party challenge that would harm a Democrat candidate.

### **Gabbard’s Numbers**

The problem for Gabbard, Clinton’s smear regardless, is that her candidacy is going nowhere and the back-and-forth with the loser in 2016 won’t change that fact.

[Her latest number](#) in the RCP average, 1.5, put her in ninth place behind frontrunner Joe Biden. Gabbard is even running behind Andrew Yang, who is polling at 2.3 percent. She is tied with left-wing nut Julián Castro.

Gabbard has not surpassed three percent in the RCP average, and has spent much of her time around one or zero, since it began tracking her in January.

In other words, her candidacy won’t last much longer.

*Photo: AP Images*



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