

‘Obvious Malicious Intent’: Tulsi Gabbard Hits Clinton with Defamation Suit over ‘Russian Asset’ Smear

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Democratic presidential hopeful Tulsi Gabbard is suing two-time White House runner-up Hillary Clinton over her claim that Gabbard was a “Russian asset,” alleging that the lie hurt not just her campaign but the entire election.

Clinton “*lied about her perceived rival Tulsi Gabbard... publicly, unambiguously, and with obvious malicious intent*” when she claimed Gabbard was “*the favorite of the Russians,*” the campaign alleges in the [suit](#), filed on Wednesday in the federal Southern District of New York. While Clinton isn’t technically running against Gabbard in the 2020 contest, the filing drily notes that the role of president is “*a position Clinton has long coveted, but has not been able to attain.*”

The filing alleges Clinton harmed not just Gabbard but also “*American voters*” and “*American democracy*” by pushing the baseless smear, citing “*scientifically conducted opinion surveys*” indicating that millions of potential voters believed Clinton’s claims due to her status as a political insider and authority figure with likely access to non-public information. Over 200 articles have been published amplifying the smear since Clinton first uttered it in an October episode of Democratic strategist David Plouffe’s ‘Campaign HQ’ podcast, and the campaign estimates the former secretary of state’s attacks cost Gabbard \$50 million in lost donations, lost votes, and reputational damage.

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