

Looks Like Hillary Wasn't Alone: Judicial Watch Obtains 216 Official Emails From Jeh Johnson's Private Email Account

It appears former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton wasn't the only Obama administration official using private, unsecured email to conduct government business that relates to U.S. national security interests.

Judicial Watch has obtained 216 government work-related emails from a private, web-based email account used by former Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson. The documents include emails discussing high-level meetings Johnson was to have with the Kuwaiti ambassador and Saudi Arabian Interior Ministry officials as well as a West African \$4.5 million online consumer fraud scam.

In May of last year, the government watchdog organization filed a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit after the Department of Homeland Security failed to respond to a FOIA demand for all emails "relating to official United States Government business" to or from Johnson using email addresses.

Judicial Watch issued the following statement:

This is the first production of emails sent through private, web-based email accounts of Johnson, Deputy Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, Chief of Staff Christian Marrone and General Counsel Stevan Bunnell that were also sent to government email accounts. The emails released reveal that:

- The Kuwaiti ambassador to the U.S. sent an email

to Johnson's unsecure email account attempting to set up a meeting for him with Kuwait's Interior Ministry and discussing Kuwait's Interior Minister's having meetings with the heads of CIA, FBI and DNI.

- The U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia emailed to Johnson's unsecure email account, discussing Johnson's upcoming meetings at the Saudi Interior Ministry in Jeddah.
- DHS Chief of Staff Marrone held sensitive discussions with an unidentified individual regarding the earnings of Lockheed Martin and a space vehicle launch consortium between Lockheed and Boeing, which the sender said to "use wisely." Marrone also received procurement documents related to launch vehicles and their "Launch Infrastructure Capability."
- Johnson gave a "Progress Report" speech in which he cited the Homeland Security Department's "strides in cybersecurity."
- An unidentified individual spoofed Johnson's name and email account in a phishing scam, telling recipients that they could get money from "an abandoned fund worth . 4.5 million in West Africa" if they would send back their personal details.

Prior to the Obama administration's leaving office, a federal court ordered the Department of Homeland Security to preserve email records sought by Judicial Watch. In petitioning the court for the preservation order, Judicial Watch argued:

A court order requiring preservation of these emails is particularly necessary now as DHS has suggested that these officials may have been acting without authorization by sending emails from these accounts ... As such, there is no assurance that these officials will

abide by a “request” by the agency to preserve these emails, particularly after their employment ends. ...

Judicial Watch previously uncovered documents revealing that Secretary Jeh Johnson and 28 other agency officials used government computers to access personal web-based email accounts despite an agency-wide ban due to heightened security concerns. The documents also reveal that Homeland Security officials misled Rep. Scott Perry (R-Pa.) when Perry specifically asked whether personal accounts were being used for official government business.

“It is ironic and disconcerting that Secretary Johnson and his aides touted Homeland Security’s ‘great strides in cybersecurity’ while using unsecured, private, web-based email accounts that the department had officially prohibited,” Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton said. “The fact that the documents found in these email accounts were so heavily redacted and that Johnson’s name and email account were spoofed in a phishing scam is indicative of just how lax communications security was inside Homeland Security during the Obama administration.” {eoa}