

WikiLeaks: Here's the Sweet Deal the FBI Was Offered to 'Down-Classify' Clinton Emails

According to a report by *The Weekly Standard*, a key staff member of Hillary Clinton's State Department leadership team attempted "repeatedly" to have classified material discovered on her private email server downgraded to an unclassified status.

This process, called "down-classifying," is typically done when information that was previously classified due to its sensitive nature at the time becomes less sensitive of U.S. national interests. That there were attempts to do so with documents stored on Clinton's private server flies in the face of her repeated assertions that she never used it to store, send, or receive classified material.

In fact, she has publicly stated any classified material found was classified after she handled it—another process known as "up-classifying."

As *The Weekly Standard* reported, regarding one of Under Secretary of State for Management Patrick Kennedy's efforts to down-classify Clinton documents:

A senior FBI official in the international operations division describes conversations with Kennedy about the classification of emails. In his interview, this official says his section of the FBI had attempted to contact Kennedy repeatedly over the course of several months in the spring of 2015. Kennedy did not return the calls. In the late spring or early summer of 2015, the FBI official reported to work surprised to find a note indicating that Kennedy had

called.

According to the summary, Kennedy wanted help. The FBI official spoke with Kennedy and Kennedy raised the possibility of keeping at least one Clinton email from public disclosure by obtaining a "B9" exemption under the Freedom of Information Act, a rarely used exemption that refers to "geological and geophysical information and data." One email in particular concerned Kennedy and, according to the FBI summary, providing a B9 exemption "would allow him to archive the document in the basement of the department of state never to be seen again." The FBI official told Kennedy that he would look into the email if Kennedy would authorize a pending request for additional FBI personnel in Iraq.

Jason Miller, a spokesman for Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's campaign, said the report should be "distressing for anyone who cares about keeping classified information safe." Not only did Kennedy try and change the classification of certain emails, he noted, it was done by "offering quid-pro-quos to other agencies" in order to get what he wanted.

"The Clinton campaign must immediately disavow Kennedy and give the American people a full accounting of any communication relating to the request to change the classification levels on certain emails," he said.