

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 11, 2017

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Chaffetz and Ranking Member Cummings:

Thank you for your letter of March 8, 2017 requesting information about White House compliance with the Presidential Records Act (PRA). The White House is committed to preserving records of activities which relate to or have an effect upon the carrying out of the President's constitutional, statutory or other official or ceremonial duties. All White House employees have been trained on their responsibilities under the PRA.

Responses to your specific questions are as follows:

Question 1

Your letter seeks identification of senior officials covered by the PRA who have used an "alias email account" to conduct official business. The White House has consulted with the Archivist concerning the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) interpretation of the term "alias email account." NARA interprets "alias email account" to mean multiple email accounts. There are no senior officials covered by the PRA with multiple accounts. As is common in large organizations, the White House's Information Technology system creates mirrored addresses for each user for security and other reasons. However, there is only one e-mail account per user independent of the number of addresses.

Questions 2, 3, & 4

Questions 2 through 4 of your letter asks for the White House to disclose policies involving "the use of non-official electronic accounts," "the use of official text message or other messaging or communications applications, and social media platforms," and how presidential records created or transmitted on certain electronic messaging accounts are "secured and preserved." It is the policy of the White House to comply with the preservation requirements of the PRA regardless of where presidential records reside, how they are created, or the manner in which they are transmitted.

Question 5

All White House personnel have received or will receive mandatory in-person training on their obligations under the PRA. The Office of the Counsel to the President provided this training to virtually all personnel within the first weeks of the new Administration and continued to provide regular training sessions for new personnel. Moreover, the Office of the Counsel to the President provides written guidance to inform employees of PRA requirements.

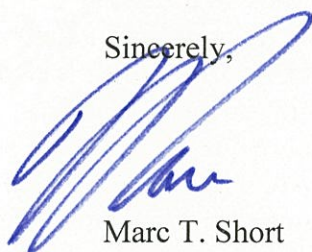
Question 6

Your letter also asks for “a detailed description of the electronic system . . . to archive email and other electronic records.” In order to accommodate the Committee’s request while balancing the concerns for IT security, your staff should contact Chris Herndon of the White House Information Service to discuss the most appropriate way to address your need for this information.

Finally, the White House is in receipt of your letter to White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, dated March 8, 2017, seeking information about the Executive Office of the President’s (EOP) compliance with the Federal Records Act (FRA) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). As I am sure you know, the components within the EOP subject to the FRA and FOIA are Executive Branch agencies not under the supervision of the President’s Chief of Staff for purposes of their compliance with the FRA and FOIA. As such, the heads of those components are in the best position to receive requests from your Committee concerning compliance under the appropriate statutes.

This Administration is committed to the effective implementation of Federal records preservation and public access laws. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Marc T. Short
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs