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Obama Is Urged To Fire IRS Chief Before Impeachment Looms

Republicans have still not gotten to the bottom of the IRS scandal that erupted more than two years ago. Plainly, there is more than a smidgen of bitterness, and finally, the IRS Chief may be feeling the heat. Jason Chaffetz, Chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has gathered up 20 Republican members who penned a [long letter to President Obama](#). The letter requests the President to remove IRS Commissioner John Koskinen for obstructing the congressional investigation into the IRS's targeting of conservative groups.



The letter claims that Mr. Koskinen failed to comply with a congressional subpoena, failed to testify truthfully, and failed to preserve and produce up to 24,000 emails relevant to the investigation. The [Press Release](#) is worth reading, as is the Committee's [timeline](#) of the IRS scandal. Chairman Jason Chaffetz issued the following statement:

Mr. Koskinen should no longer be the IRS Commissioner. We have asked the President to remove Mr. Koskinen from office.

Mr. Koskinen failed in his duty to preserve and produce documentation to this Committee. The IRS failed to comply with a congressional subpoena. The IRS further failed by making false statements to Congress. We will pursue all constitutional remedies at our disposal, including potential contempt proceedings or perhaps impeachment of Commissioner Koskinen.

Under Mr. Koskinen's leadership, the IRS failed to properly preserve agency records despite a subpoena and an internal preservation order. Shortly after being sworn into office, Mr. Koskinen was issued a subpoena. This created a legal obligation to preserve materials relevant to the Congressional investigation. However, just one month later, with an awareness that a gap existed in Lois Lerner's email production, the IRS destroyed back-up tapes. These tapes may have contained the missing emails from the time frame in which she admitted the agency was targeting conservative 501(c)(4) groups.

Not only did this destruction of 24,000 potential emails occur after the materials were under subpoena, but also after the agency's own Chief Technology Officer (CTO) issued a preservation notice ordering employees not to destroy anything. The CTO later stated he was 'blown away' that back-up tapes were destroyed ten months after his preservation notice.

Further, The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration's (TIGTA) June 30, 2015 investigative report confirmed the IRS destroyed documents and misled Congress about the agency's efforts in complying with congressional subpoenas.

Mr. Koskinen misled Congress and the American people when he appeared before the Oversight Committee in 2014 and asserted he would produce all of Ms. Lerner's emails. At the time of his testimony, the agency was already aware that gaps existed in Ms. Lerner's email production due to a hard drive crash. Mr. Koskinen did not make Congress aware of this problem nor did he take sufficient efforts to recover the missing emails. TIGTA's report confirmed that the IRS failed to even look for the back-up tapes and neglected to look at five of the six sources where emails could have existed.

At best, Commissioner Koskinen was derelict in his duties to preserve agency records. At worst, he and the IRS engaged in an orchestrated plan to hide information from Congress. Given Commissioner Koskinen's obfuscation and misleading statements to Congress, and the false claims that key evidence was permanently destroyed, the result has been an unnecessarily protracted investigation. More importantly though, the American people will never know all the facts surrounding the agency's targeting of conservative tax-exempt 501(c)(4) groups. This is an unacceptable outcome and one that demands those responsible be held accountable."

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