

650,000 Emails Found On Anthony Weiner's Laptop; DOJ Blocked Clinton Foundation Probe

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Yesterday, we reported that the FBI has found "[tens of thousands of emails](#)" belonging to Huma Abedin on Anthony Weiner's computer, raising questions how practical it is that any conclusive finding will be available or made by the FBI in the few days left before the elections

Now, [according to the WSJ](#), it appears that Federal agents are preparing to scour roughly 650,000 emails that, as we reported moments ago were [discovered weeks ago on the laptop of Anthony Weiner](#), to see how many relate to a prior probe of Hillary Clinton's email use, as metadata on the device suggests there may be thousands sent to or from the private server that the Democratic nominee used while she was secretary of state, according to people familiar with the matter.

As the WSJ adds, the review will take weeks at a minimum to determine whether those messages are work-related emails between Huma Abedin, a close Clinton aide and the estranged wife of Mr. Weiner, and State Department officials; how many are duplicates of emails already reviewed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and whether they include either classified information or important new evidence in the Clinton email probe, which FBI officials call "Midyear."

And, as we further [reported earlier today](#), the FBI has had to await a court order to begin reviewing the emails, because they were uncovered in an unrelated probe of Mr. Weiner, and that order was delayed for reasons that remain unclear.

More stunning is just how many emails were found on Weiner's computer. And while one can only imagine the content of some of the more persona ones, the WSJ writes that the latest development began in early October when New York-based FBI officials notified Andrew McCabe, the bureau's second-in-command, that while investigating Mr. Weiner for possibly sending sexually charged messages to a minor, they had recovered a laptop with 650,000 emails. Many, they said, were from the accounts of Ms. Abedin, according to people familiar with the matter.

Those emails stretched back years, these people said, and were on a laptop that both Mr. Weiner and Ms. Abedin used and that hadn't previously come up in the Clinton email probe. Ms. Abedin said in late August that the couple were separating.

The FBI had searched the computer while looking for child pornography, people familiar with the matter said, but the warrant they used didn't give them authority to search for matters related to Mrs. Clinton's email arrangement at

the State Department. Mr. Weiner has denied sending explicit or indecent messages to the teenager.

As reported yesterday, it appears that there are potentially tens of thousands of Abedin linked emails on Weiner's computer:

In their initial review of the laptop, the metadata showed many messages, apparently in the thousands, that were either sent to or from the private email server at Mrs. Clinton's home that had been the focus of so much investigative effort for the FBI. Senior FBI officials decided to let the Weiner investigators proceed with a closer examination of the metadata on the computer, and report back to them.

The WSJ then connects the dots between how the Weiner emails were linked to the Clinton reopening of the Clinton probe, despite Loretta Lynch's and the [DOJ's vocal urges not to do so](#):

At a meeting early last week of senior Justice Department and FBI officials, a member of the department's senior national-security staff asked for an update on the Weiner laptop, the people familiar with the matter said. At that point, officials realized that no one had acted to obtain a warrant, these people said.

Mr. McCabe then instructed the email investigators to talk to the Weiner investigators and see whether the laptop's contents could be relevant to the Clinton email probe, these people said. After the investigators spoke, the agents agreed it was potentially relevant.

Mr. Comey was given an update, decided to go forward with the case and notified Congress on Friday, with explosive results. Senior Justice Department officials had warned Mr. Comey that telling Congress would violate well-established policies against overt actions that could affect an election, and some within the FBI have been unhappy at Mr. Comey's repeated public statements on the probe, going back to his first press conference on the subject in July.

But wait it gets better.

Recall that this is the same Andrew McCabe whose wife the [Wall Street Journal reported](#) last week received \$467,500 in campaign funds in late 2015 from the political action committee of Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a longtime ally of the Clintons and, until he was elected governor in November 2013, a Clinton Foundation board member.

Mr. McAuliffe had supported Dr. McCabe in the hopes she and a handful of other Democrats might help win a majority in the state Senate, giving Mr. McAuliffe more sway in the state capitol. Dr. McCabe lost her race last November, and Democrats failed to win their majority.

FBI officials have said Mr. McCabe had no role in the Clinton email probe until he became deputy director, and there was no conflict of interest because by then his wife's campaign was over.

Which brings us to the second big topic: the Clinton Foundation, and how the DOJ made sure that particular probe never made the light of day. At the same time as the Clinton server was being investigated, other Clinton-related investigations were under way within the FBI, and they have been the subject of internal debate for months.

Early this year, four FBI field offices—New York, Los Angeles, Washington and Little Rock, Ark.—were collecting information about the Clinton Foundation to see if there was evidence of financial crimes or influence-peddling, according to people familiar with the matter.

The WSJ touches on something fascinating: Los Angeles agents had picked up information about the Clinton Foundation from an unrelated public corruption case and had issued some subpoenas for bank records related to the foundation, these people said. So where did that trail go? Apparently nowhere.

The Washington field office was probing financial relationships involving Mr. McAuliffe before he became a Clinton Foundation board member, these people said. Mr. McAuliffe has denied any wrongdoing, and his lawyer has said the probe is focused on whether he failed to register as an agent of a foreign entity. The FBI field office in New York had done the most work on the Clinton Foundation case and received help from the FBI field office in Little Rock, the people familiar with the matter said.

In February, FBI officials made a presentation to the Justice Department, according to these people. By all accounts, the meeting didn't go well.

Some said that is because the FBI didn't present compelling evidence to justify more aggressive pursuit of the Clinton Foundation, and that the career public integrity prosecutors in the room simply believed it wasn't a very strong case. Others said that from the start, the Justice Department officials were stern, icy and dismissive of the case.

"That was one of the weirdest meetings I've ever been to," one participant told others afterward, according to people familiar with the matter.

Needless to say, the probe into the Foundation faded.

But back to the Clinton probe, according to a person familiar with the probes, on Aug. 12, a senior Justice Department official called Mr. McCabe to voice his displeasure at finding that New York FBI agents were still openly pursuing the Clinton Foundation probe, despite the department's refusal to allow more aggressive investigative methods in the case. Mr. McCabe said agents still had the authority to pursue the issue as long as they didn't use those methods.

At this point a question emerges: did McCabe seek to defend or press on with a Clinton probe:

Mr. McCabe's defenders in the agency said that following the call, he repeated the instruction that he had given earlier in the Clinton Foundation investigation: Agents were to keep pursuing the work within the authority they had.

Others further down the FBI chain of command, however, said agents were given a much starker instruction on the case: "Stand down." When agents questioned why they weren't allowed to take more aggressive steps, they said they were told the order had come from the deputy director—Mr. McCabe. Others familiar with the matter deny Mr. McCabe or any other senior FBI official gave such a stand-down instruction.

At this point the two probes, into Hillary's email and the Clinton Foundation converged:

For agents who already felt uneasy about FBI leadership's handling of the Clinton Foundation case, the moment only deepened their concerns, these people said. For those who felt the probe hadn't yet found significant evidence of criminal conduct, the leadership's approach was the right response to the facts on the ground.

Things accelerated over the past two months, when in September, agents on the foundation case asked to see the emails contained on nongovernment laptops that had been searched as part of the Clinton email case, but that request was rejected by prosecutors at the Eastern District of New York, in Brooklyn. Those emails were given to the FBI based on grants of partial immunity and limited-use agreements, meaning agents could only use them for the purpose of investigating possible mishandling of classified information.

Some FBI agents were dissatisfied with that answer, and asked for permission to make a similar request to federal prosecutors in Manhattan, according to people familiar with the matter. Mr. McCabe, these people said, told them no and added that they could not "go prosecutor-shopping."

Not long after that discussion, FBI agents informed the bureau's leaders about the Weiner laptop, prompting Mr. Comey's disclosure to Congress and setting off the furor that promises to consume the final days of a tumultuous campaign

While much of the latest developments are known, or could have been inferred assuming more corruption within government agencies, the punchline is that the weeks if not months of upcoming work means that if Clinton wins the White House, she will likely do so amid at least one ongoing investigation into her inner circle being handled by law-enforcement officials who are deeply divided over how to manage such cases. It also means that Trump will be hounding Hillary for the remainder of the campaign as being the only presidential candidate to seek election with a recently reopened criminal probe hanging over her head.

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