



Republican National Committee

Reince Priebus
Chairman

April 22, 2015

Josh Earnest
White House Press Secretary
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Earnest:

During the White House press briefing on April 20, 2015, you were asked whether the White House could categorically deny that donors to the William J. Clinton Foundation ("Clinton Foundation") received special treatment or favors from the Administration, including from former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her State Department. While you refused to provide a definitive denial, you praised the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") signed by then-CEO of the Clinton Foundation Bruce Lindsey and then-co-chair of the Obama-Biden Transition Team Valerie Jarrett, on behalf of the Obama Administration. In your own words, you said the MOU was signed "to ensure that [Secretary Clinton] and her office were compliant with all of the existing ethical guidelines that were in place." From your response:

"This was a memorandum of understanding that did ensure that given the unique circumstances of her family, not every Secretary of State came into office with a presidential level family foundation that was doing excellent work all across the world. So there were some steps that were taken to ensure that she and her office were compliant with all of the existing ethical guidelines that were in place, and in many places this memorandum of understanding actually went beyond the baseline level of those guidelines to put in place strict ethical requirements and I know there's been a lot of accusations made about this, but not a lot of evidence." [1]

Per the terms of the MOU that you cited, donors to the foundation had to be disclosed publicly each year and new foreign government donations or increases in annual contributions from existing foreign government donors had to be vetted by independent ethics officials within the State Department. However, as referenced in a letter dated March

[1] Josh Earnest, [White House Press Briefing](#), Washington, D.C., 4/20/15



25, 2015 (attached) from myself to Ms. Jarrett, now White House Senior Adviser, the MOU was repeatedly violated by the Clinton Foundation. Donors to the foundation who contributed tens of millions were never disclosed and foreign government donors were neither disclosed nor vetted for ethical conflicts. For example, a \$500,000 donation from the government of Algeria was never submitted for vetting, and from 2010-2013, donors to the Clinton Health Access Initiative ("CHAI") were never disclosed. ^[2]

Since you cited the MOU from the podium in the White House briefing room as an example of the high ethical standards adhered to by the Clinton State Department, I must assume you are familiar with the MOU's contents and how abysmally the MOU failed to achieve its purpose of disclosure and transparency. Given your familiarity with the document, I would now pose to you the same questions I asked of Ms. Jarrett – questions to which no response was given – regarding how the MOU was repeatedly violated, what the White House knew about these violations, and what efforts, if any, were made to enforce the guidelines in the MOU.

- At what point did the Administration become aware that the MOU and the process of vetting Clinton Foundation donors were flawed?
- What did the White House do, if anything, to mitigate issues with the Clinton Foundation's donors?
- Was the White House aware that the MOU was insufficient while Clinton was serving as Secretary of State? If so, were any addendums added to supplement the MOU?
- Who at the White House or within the Administration was in charge of vetting donors to CHAI?
- Was there any independent audit or verification that the Clinton Foundation was abiding by the MOU's Donor Disclosure provisions?
- Were White House officials aware that CHAI's donor lists were not being disclosed annually?
- Were foreign governments that contributed to the Clinton Foundation given special treatment or consideration by the White House?
- If the White House had been aware of the violations, would the Clinton Foundation or Secretary Clinton have been reprimanded in some fashion for their actions?

With new questions surfacing regarding foreign contributions and conflicts of interest surrounding the Clinton Foundation, now more than ever, the public deserves answers to these questions. I once again request responses to each question in writing.

^[2] Rosalind S. Helderman and Tom Hamburger, "Foreign Governments Gave Millions To Foundation While Clinton Was At State Dept.," *The Washington Post*, 2/25/15; Jonathan Allen, "Exclusive: Despite Hillary Clinton Promise, Charity Did Not Disclose Donors," *Reuters*, 3/19/15

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'P' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Reince Priebus
Chairman, Republican National Committee