

April 3, 2025

Ms. Susan Wiles
White House Chief of Staff
Executive Office of the President
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Wiles,

As Senators with deep experience in defense, intelligence, and diplomacy, we are writing to express grave concern and request information necessary to determine the full scope of and damage caused by the use of unclassified commercial applications, like Signal and Gmail, by senior White House officials and members of the President's Cabinet to conduct classified and sensitive national security activity and communications.

In a grave breach of national security, senior White House officials and members of the President's Cabinet, including National Security Advisor Michael Waltz, appear to have engaged in an extensive pattern and practice of using unsecure commercial messaging applications to undertake sensitive national security deliberations and discussions, in violation of federal criminal laws and other requirements designed to safeguard classified and other sensitive national security information and preserve presidential and federal records.

New reporting indicates that the "Houthi PC small group" chat established by Mr. Waltz was not an isolated incident. According to recent reporting, Mr. Waltz and his team "regularly set up chats on Signal to coordinate official work on issues including Ukraine, China, Gaza, Middle East policy, Africa and Europe, according to four people who have been personally added to Signal chats."¹ This may have included "at least 20" such chats, which participants in the chat say included "instances of sensitive information being discussed."² As one alleged participant in at least some of the group chats commented: "Waltz built the entire NSC communications process on Signal."³

This follows earlier reporting that Mr. Waltz "created and hosted multiple other sensitive national security conversations on Signal with cabinet members, including separate threads on how to broker peace between Russia and Ukraine as well as military operations."⁴ Another recent report indicates that one or more messaging chats initiated by Mr. Waltz involved Somalia.⁵ This same report alleges, moreover, that Mr. Waltz used his personal email account to conduct government business, while a senior aide to Mr.

¹ Dasha Burns, *Waltz's team set up at least 20 Signal group chats for crises across the world*, Politico (April 2, 2025), <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/04/02/waltzs-team-set-up-at-least-20-signal-group-chats-for-crises-across-the-world-00266845>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ Alexander Ward, Josh Dawsey, and Meridith McGraw, *Mike Waltz is Losing Support Inside the White House*, The Wall Street Journal (March 30, 2025), <https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/mike-waltz-is-losing-support-inside-the-white-house-2b17459c>.

⁵ John Hudson, *Waltz and staff used Gmail accounts for government communications, officials say*, The Washington Post (April 1, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/04/01/waltz-national-security-council-signal-gmail>.

Waltz used the same “commercial email service for highly technical conversations with colleagues at other government agencies involving sensitive military positions and powerful weapons systems related to an ongoing conflict [...]”⁶

These revelations are shocking, but not surprising, in light of the Signal group chat that Mr. Waltz established ahead of military attacks in Yemen. When Mr. Waltz initiated the messaging group on March 11, 2025, none of the invited participants, including you, Vice President J.D. Vance, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, and Central Intelligence Agency Director John Ratcliffe, expressed surprise, confusion, or unease at having been added to such a group on a commercially-available messaging application that is downloaded for use on unclassified electronic devices.

Mr. Waltz’ first message to the group on March 11, 2025, referenced an earlier meeting in the “Sit Room” (White House Situation Room), a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) equipped to handle the nation’s most sensitive information and the appropriate venue for communicating and coordinating on matters of national security. None of the at least 18 participants in the group chat interjected when others provided clearly classified or operationally sensitive information, or requested that they be removed at any time during the conversation, even though Mr. Waltz adjusted the settings at the beginning of the chat to auto-delete all of group’s messages after a week and then changed the auto-delete setting to 4 weeks shortly after Defense Secretary Hegseth provided specific classified details on the impending military strikes.

The destruction of presidential or federal records is illegal. To ensure that the Senate can fulfill its constitutionally mandated oversight duties, and to inform future remedial legislation, we seek and expect your full cooperation by Thursday, April 10, 2025, with the initial requests below.

1. Please take immediate action to (1) preserve all national security-related communications involving White House officials that have occurred since January 21, 2025, on commercial messaging platforms, like Signal or Gmail; (2) prevent the destruction of such records, including through auto-delete settings, and take all necessary and possible measures to retrieve communications that may have been deleted on some devices but that may still be visible on others; and (3) issue a directive to all senior White House officials and Cabinet Members to cease immediately the use of unclassified, non-government communications platforms to conduct national security communications.
2. In addition, as we begin our inquiry, please provide full and truthful answers to the following, including in classified form, if necessary:
 - a. Please identify and itemize in precise detail all other national security-related communications that Mr. Waltz or other senior White House officials initiated or participated in using Signal, Gmail, or other commercially available platforms, to include messaging groups to discuss diplomatic or military activity.
 - b. Relatedly, please identify all military operations or activities that Mr. Waltz or other senior White House officials discussed using Signal, Gmail, or other commercially available platforms, including whether those discussions referred to, among others:
 - i. the U.S. military’s January 30, 2025, airstrike in Syria targeting a senior operative in Hurras al-Din, an al-Qaeda affiliate;⁷

⁶ *Id.*

- ii. a March 14, 2025, military operation in Iraq that targeted the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria’s (ISIS) chief of global operations, which occurred three days after Mr. Waltz established the “Houthi PC small group” Signal chat on March 11, 2025, and one day before Secretary of Defense Hegseth disclosed classified information about the military strikes in Yemen;⁸ or
- iii. air strikes in Somalia, which U.S. Africa Command has undertaken several times since January 21, 2025.⁹
- c. Please clarify whether any senior White House officials and Cabinet officials, to include Mr. Waltz, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, and Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, used their personal devices for any of the communications described above.
- d. Please clarify whether any senior White House officials and Cabinet Officials were on foreign travel while participating or included in any national security-related messaging groups or communications on Signal or other commercially-available platforms. If so, please explain which officials were on foreign travel, where they were located, whether they used Signal or other platforms on their personal or work devices, and who in the White House authorized the platforms’ use.
- e. Have any relevant communications been irretrievably destroyed, including through the use of an auto-delete function, such that they cannot be recovered, reproduced, or copied to government systems, as required by federal records retention laws and policies? If so, please clarify which communications can no longer be retrieved with as much specificity as possible.


Sincerely,




Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator

⁷ U.S. Central Command, *CENTCOM Forces Kill Senior Operative of Terror Group Hurras al-Din, an Al-Qaeda affiliate* (January 30, 2025), <https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/4048853/centcom-forces-kill-senior-operative-of-terror-group-hurras-al-din-an-al-qaeda>.

⁸ U.S. Central Command, *CENTCOM Forces Kill ISIS Chief of Global Operations Who Also Served as ISIS #2* (March 14, 2025), <https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/4121311/centcom-forces-kill-isis-chief-of-global-operations-who-also-served-as-isis-2/>

⁹ U.S. Africa Command, *2025 Airstrikes*, <https://www.africom.mil/what-we-do/airstrikes/2025-airstrikes>.