

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
FACSIMILE (202) 225-4784
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

www.oversight.house.gov

MEMORANDUM

February 26, 2008

To: Members of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Fr: Democratic Committee Staff

Re: Supplemental Information for Full Committee Hearing on White House E-mails

On Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building, the full Committee will hold a hearing entitled "Electronic Records Preservation at the White House." This memo provides supplemental information for members regarding the status of the Committee's investigation into the loss of official e-mail.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee has been investigating White House compliance with the Presidential Records Act. In preparation for this hearing, the Committee received more than 20,000 pages of internal e-mails and other documents from the White House and the National Archives and Records Administration. The Committee also interviewed or received written answers to questions from six current or former officials in the White House responsible for preserving White House records.

The documents and interviews raise serious questions about the White House's compliance with the Presidential Records Act, which requires the White House to preserve e-mails documenting the "activities, deliberations, decisions, and policies" of the President. The information the Committee has received shows:

- **The White House has not had a reliable system for preserving White House e-mails since 2002, when the White House made the decision to stop using the Automatic Records Management System (ARMS) used by the Clinton White House.** Steven McDevitt, an official in the White House Office of the Chief Information Officer from September 2002 through October 2006, informed the Committee that during his time at the White House, "the process by which email was being collected and retained was primitive and the risk that data would be lost was high." As early as January 2004, the