

The Oversight Committee has learned that over the objections of the National Archives, Vice President Cheney exempted his office from the presidential order that establishes government-wide procedures for safeguarding classified national security information. The Vice President asserts that his office is not an "entity within the executive branch."

As described in a letter from Chairman Waxman to the Vice President, the National Archives protested the Vice President's position in letters written in June 2006 and August 2006. When these letters were ignored, the National Archives wrote to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales in January 2007 to seek a resolution of the impasse. The Vice President's staff responded by seeking to abolish the agency within the Archives that is responsible for implementing the President's executive order.

In his letter to the Vice President, Chairman Waxman writes: "I question both the legality and wisdom of your actions. ... [I]t would appear particularly irresponsible to give an office with your history of security breaches an exemption from the safeguards that apply to all other executive branch officials."

A fact sheet prepared by Chairman Waxman describes other instances in which the Vice President's office has sought to avoid oversight and accountability.

### Documents and Links

- [Chairman Waxman's Letter to the Vice President](#)
- [Letter from National Archives to the Attorney General](#)
- [Second Letter from National Archives to the Vice President's Office](#)
- [First Letter from National Archives to the Vice President's Office](#)
- [Fact Sheet on the Vice President's Efforts to Avoid Oversight and Accountability](#)