

Eshoo Urges Attorney General to Resolve Cheney-Classified Info Impasse

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, Chair of the House Intelligence Subcommittee on Intelligence Community Management, wrote to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales this week urging him to determine whether the Office of the Vice President is required to comply with government-wide regulations on handling classified information.

Since 2004, the Office of the Vice President has refused to submit to routine compliance audits of its handling of classified information. Vice President Cheney's office asserted that it was not bound by regulations on classified information security because it is not an "entity within the executive branch."

The National Archives' Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), which ensures compliance of the regulations, asked the Attorney General in January 2007 to rule on whether the regulations apply to the Vice President's office. To date, the Attorney General has not responded to the ISOO's request.

"The Attorney General is clearly responsible for determining whether the Office of the Vice President is governed by the same regulations that apply to the rest of the executive branch for securing classified information," Eshoo said. "Yet for six months, the Attorney General has been silent on the issue and allowed this impasse to fester.

"Because the Office of the Vice President is deeply involved with classified programs, it is critical for the Attorney General to uphold the integrity of the system that safeguards classified information," Eshoo said.

Eshoo wrote to the Attorney General on Wednesday in response to concerns raised during a July 12th subcommittee hearing she held on issues related to classified information and the implementation of Executive Order 12958, which establishes the regulations governing classified material.

Rep. Rush Holt, D-N.J. and a member of the subcommittee, joined Eshoo in the letter to the Attorney General.

• Eshoo's letter to the Attorney General.

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