Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

May 15, 2020

Austin Evers
American Oversight
1030 15th Street, N.W.
Suite B255
Washington, D.C. 20005

Via email: hart.wood@americanoversight.org

Re: HQ-2019-01236-F
HQ-2020-00053-F

Dear Mr. Evers:

This letter is in response to the information requested in HQ-2019-01236-F and HQ-2020-00053-F that you sent to the Department of Energy (DOE) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552. In HQ-2019-01236-F, you requested:

> All communications (including emails, email attachments, calendar invitations, text messages, or messages on messaging platforms— such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, WhatsApp, Twitter Direct Messages, or Facebook Messenger) or calendar entries involving (a) Secretary Rick Perry, or anyone serving on his behalf including Chiefs of Staff, assistants, or schedulers, and (b) Michael Bleyzer, Natasha Bleyzer, anyone communicating on their behalf, or anyone associated with SigmaBleyzer (sigmableyzer.com).
>
> Please provide all responsive records from March 2, 2017, through the date the search is conducted.

As Ms. Rachel Fellows of this office confirmed in an email on August 14, 2019, you instructed DOE to search any email records in the to, from, copy, and blind copy fields for the following two (2) terms:

- "Bleyzer" OR
- "sigmableyzer.com"

As Ms. Fellows confirmed in the same email, you also agreed to establish a comprehensive list of DOE employees for this request, to be comprised of the following individuals: Secretary Perry, Chief of Staff Brian McCormack, Luke Wallwork, and Stan Gerdes.

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Printed with soy ink on recycled paper

Finally, as Ms. Fellows also confirmed in the same email, you agreed to limit this request to only emails, email attachments, and Outlook calendar records. You agreed to exclude the various other types of non-email records that were listed in the original request submission (including "text messages, or messages on messaging platforms— such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, WhatsApp, Twitter Direct Messages, or Facebook Messenger").

In HQ-2020-00053-F, you requested:

> All records reflecting communications (including emails, email attachments, text messages, messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp), telephone call logs, calendar invitations, calendar entries, meeting notices, meeting agendas, informational material, draft legislation, talking points, any handwritten or electronic notes taken during any oral communications, summaries of any oral communications, or other materials) between (a) the DOE officials specified below and (b) any of external individuals or organizations listed below.
>
> Specified DOE Officials:
>
> i. Secretary Rick Perry
> ii. Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette
> iii. Former Chief of Staff Brian McCormack
> iv. Anyone currently serving in the capacity of Chief of Staff
> v. Under Secretary Mark Menezes
> vi. Samuel Buchan, Special Adviser
> vii. William Cooper, General Counsel
> viii. Paul Tumminia, Senior Advisor, Office of Russian and Eurasian Affairs
> ix. Anyone serving in the capacity of White House Advisor or Liaison
>
> External individuals and entities:
>
> i. Naftogaz, including anyone with an email address ending in naftogaz.com or naftogaz-europe.com
> ii. Andrew Favorov
> iii. Igor Fruman
> iv. Lev Parnas
> v. Harry Sargeant III
> vi. 45 Energy Group, including anyone with an email address ending in 45energygroup.com
> vii. Healy Baumgardner
> viii. SigmaBleyzer, including anyone with an email address ending in sigmableyzer.com
> ix. The Bleyzer Foundation, including anyone with an email address ending in bleyzerfoundation.org

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x. Michael Bleyzer
xi. Robert Bensh, including anyone with an email address ending in robertbensh.net or robertbensh.org

Please produce all responsive records from January 1, 2019, through the date the search is conducted.

Both requests were assigned to DOE's Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES) to conduct a search of its files for responsive documents.

As indicated in our February 4, 2020 letter, DOE identified one (1) document containing ITA equities. This document has now been reviewed by ITA and DOE and is being released to you with certain information withheld pursuant to Exemption 6 of the FOIA, 5 USC Section 552 (b)(6).

This satisfies the standard set forth at 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(8)(A) that agencies shall withhold information under FOIA "only if (I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption . . . ; or (II) disclosure is prohibited by law . . . ." 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(8)(A) also provides that whenever full disclosure of a record is not possible, agencies shall "consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible . . . ."

If you have any questions about the processing of this request or this letter, you may contact Hilarie Snyder, Trial Attorney, at Hilarie.E.Snyder@usdoj.gov or at (202) 305-0747.

I appreciate the opportunity to assist you with this matter.

Sincerely,

Alexander C. Morris

Digitally signed by Alexander C. Morris
Date: 2020.05.15 19:42:38 -04'00'

Alexander C. Morris
FOIA Officer
Office of Public Information

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Request #: HQ-2019-01236-F
HQ-2020-00053-F

This letter is in response to the requests from Mr. Austin Evers:

In FOIA Request HQ-2019-01236-F, you requested:

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> **Please provide all responsive records from March 2, 2017, through the date the search is conducted.**

In FOIA request HQ-2020-00053-F, you requested:

> **All records reflecting communications (including emails, email attachments, text messages, messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp), telephone call logs, calendar invitations, calendar entries, meeting notices, meeting agendas, informational material, draft legislation, talking points, any handwritten or electronic notes taken during any oral communications, summaries of any oral communications, or other materials) between (a) the DOE officials specified below and (b) any of external individuals or organizations listed below.**
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> **Specified DOE Officials:**
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> **i. Secretary Rick Perry**
> **ii. Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette**
> **iii. Former Chief of Staff Brian McCormack**
> **iv. Anyone currently serving in the capacity of Chief of Staff**
> **v. Under Secretary Mark Menezes**
> **vi. Samuel Buchan, Special Adviser**
> **vii. William Cooper, General Counsel**
> **viii. Paul Tumminia, Senior Advisor, Office of Russian and Eurasian Affairs**
> **ix. Anyone serving in the capacity of White House Advisor or Liaison**

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External individuals and entities:

i. **Naftogaz, including anyone with an email address ending in naftogaz.com or naftogaz-europe.com**
ii. **Andrew Favorov**
iii. **Igor Fruman**
iv. **Lev Parnas**
v. **Harry Sargeant III**
vi. **45 Energy Group, including anyone with an email address ending in 45energygroup.com**
vii. **Healy Baumgardner**
viii. **SigmaBleyzer, including anyone with an email address ending in sigmableyzer.com**
ix. **The Bleyzer Foundation, including anyone with an email address ending in bleyzerfoundation.org**
x. **Michael Bleyzer**
xi. **Robert Bensh, including anyone with an email address ending in robertbensh.net or robertbensh.org**

Please produce all responsive records from January 1, 2019, through the date the search is conducted.

DOE has identified one (1) document that was transferred in its entirety to the International Trade Administration (ITA).

- One (1) document *is being released in part pursuant to Exemption (b)(6).*

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McCoy, Traci (CONTR)

From: Bleyzer, Michael <mbleyzer@sigmableyzer.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 08, 2019 8:01 PM
To: McCormack, Brian
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus
Attachments: mg_info.txt

Just an FYI.
MB
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Steve Payne <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
> **Date:** May 8, 2019 at 6:23:12 PM CDT
> **To:** mbleyzer@sigmableyzer.com
> **Cc:** Tan Parker <tanparker@tx.rr.com>
> **Subject: Fwd: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus**
>
> Michael, nice running into you in the airport... Below is my email chain with the US Embassy in Ankara regarding the bosphorus issue I think you'll find it interesting and we are at the point to now begin negotiating directly with the Turks.
>
> Stephen Payne
> President, Linden Strategies
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ---------
> From:**Steve Payne** <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
> Date: Wed, Feb 13, 2019, 1:07 PM
> Subject: Re: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus
> To: William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov>
> Cc: Joseph Fleming <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>, Olson, Erika <OlsonE@state.gov>, Martin Claessens <Martin.Claessens@trade.gov>, BellHR@state.gov <BellHR@state.gov>
>
> Bill, thanks again for your response from 2 weeks ago.
>
> Now that the Government shutdown is over and it appears as though there is not going to be a 2nd shutdown, we would like to move forward with a meeting in Turkey in the coming weeks.
>
> In preparation for nailing down a date for a meeting would it be possible to ask the Transport Ministry to simply reply to our letter with their invitation to come to Ankara? An official invitation from the ministry would be our preference to move forward if it is possible.
>
> Thanks and I look forward to hearing back from you and or the ministry in the coming days so that we can begin nailing down a date.

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Stephen Payne
President, Linden Strategies

On Wed, Jan 23, 2019, 6:18 AM William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov wrote:

Steve,

We just received word from the head of the International Establishments and Agreements office at the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure. She stated that she would like to meet with representatives of Linden Strategies to discuss the issue of LNG tankers traveling through the Bosphorus. As I mentioned earlier, due to the shutdown, we are precluded from doing any formal advocacy work. However, if you or other Linden executives plan to be in the region in the near future, please let us know. We would be willing to set up a meeting, if interested.

Best regards,

Bill

William Czajkowski

Commercial Counselor

U.S. Commercial Service

U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey

Email: william.czajkowski@trade.gov

From: William Czajkowski
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2019 1:36 PM
To: Steve Payne <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>; Joseph Fleming <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Cc: Olson, Erika <OlsonE@state.gov>; Martin Claessens <Martin.Claessens@trade.gov>; BellHR@state.gov
Subject: RE: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus

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Steve,

I apologize for the late reply. With the U.S. government shutdown, our staffing has been reduced and our official instructions are to minimize our operations, which would preclude any advocacy. However, in order to try to get the Ministries to reply, my office has reached out to the Ministries of Energy and Transportation to inquire about their intentions to respond to Linden Strategies. The Ministries have not yet replied to our outreach. When we receive any response from the Ministries, we will forward it to you.

All the best,

Bill

William Czajkowski

Commercial Counselor

U.S. Commercial Service

U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey

Email: william.czajkowski@trade.gov

From: Steve Payne <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 3, 2019 9:09 PM
To: Joseph Fleming <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Cc: William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov>; Olson, Erika <OlsonE@state.gov>; Martin Claessens <Martin.Claessens@trade.gov>; BellHR@state.gov
Subject: Re: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus

To All:

Thanks again for your time on the call last month.

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As we discussed on that call, our primary request for your assistance is to push the Turkish Transportation and Energy ministries to reply to our letter. Once we have their reply in hand, we feel that real discussions can begin on how to resolve the issue.

As of today, we have not received a reply from either ministry.

Thanks in advance for your assistance, and please help us get this response as quickly as possible.

Stephen Payne
President, Linden Strategies

On Tue, Dec 11, 2018, 9:59 PM Joseph Fleming (b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com wrote:

Mr. Czajkowski,

We confirm for 4PM Turkey time on the 13th. Please see below for our conference line information.

Conference URL: (b) (6)

Dial in number: (b) (6)

No PIN required

International Access Numbers: (b) (6)

Regards,

Joseph Fleming
Vice President
Linden Strategies
O: +1 713.783.7783 | M: (b) (6)

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5120 Woodway Drive, Suite 5004
Houston, TX 77056
lindenstrategies.com | (b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com

On Mon, Dec 10, 2018 at 4:55 AM William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov> wrote:

Mr. Payne,

I think all can accommodate 4 PM (Turkey time) on the 13th. Do you have a call-in number we could utilize or should I set one up?

I look forward to chatting soon.

Best regards,

Bill

William Czajkowski

Commercial Counselor

U.S. Commercial Service

U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey

Email: william.czajkowski@trade.gov

From: Steve Payne <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 4, 2018 6:25 PM
To: William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov>
Cc: Olson, Erika <OlsonE@state.gov>; Martin Claessens <Martin.Claessens@trade.gov>; Joseph Fleming <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Subject: Re: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus

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Morning of the 13th, afternoon for you, works... I would suggest 3 to 5 p.m. Turkey / 8 to 10 a.m. DC time (I'm in Washington that day at the White House for the Christmas reception), and I have further flexibility 1 hour either direction... And as of now, the 17th through 19th mornings for me will also work...

Stephen Payne
President, Linden Strategies

On Tue, Dec 4, 2018, 6:23 AM William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov wrote:

Mr. Payne,

It has been a bit of a challenge to get everyone on the same page, schedule wise. But, I think we should move ahead, if possible, with U.S. Embassy Kiev, including USDOE, and U.S. Embassy Ankara. Looking at our schedules over the next couple weeks, would you be available December 13-14 or December 17-19?

I look forward to our discussion.

Bill

William Czajkowski

Commercial Counselor

U.S. Commercial Service

U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey

Email: william.czajkowski@trade.gov

From: Steve Payne <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 29, 2018 4:08 PM
To: William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov>
Cc: Ankara-Exec-DL <Ankara-Exec-DL@state.gov>; Olson, Erika <OlsonE@state.gov>;

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Martin Claessens <Martin.Claessens@trade.gov>; Joseph Fleming <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Subject: Re: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus

No, I will be traveling Monday and Tuesday but could probably make something work Wednesday Thursday or Friday of next week.

Stephen Payne
President, Linden Strategies

On Thu, Nov 29, 2018, 6:08 AM William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov wrote:

> Mr. Payne,
>
> I am coordinating schedules between U.S. Embassy Ankara, U.S. Embassy Kiev, and the U.S. Department of Energy. I hope to have a date/time proposal soon that fits everyone's availability. It appears early next week might work best for all, but I will be back in touch within a day with confirmation. Would Monday or Tuesday be a possibility for you as well?
>
> Regards, Bill
>
> ---
>
> William Czajkowski
>
> Commercial Counselor
>
> U.S. Commercial Service
>
> U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey
>
> Email: william.czajkowski@trade.gov
>
> **From:** Steve Payne <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
> **Sent:** Wednesday, November 28, 2018 10:47 PM
> **To:** William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov>
> **Cc:** Ankara-Exec-DL <Ankara-Exec-DL@state.gov>; Olson, Erika <OlsonE@state.gov>;

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Martin Claessens <Martin.Claessens@trade.gov>; Joseph Fleming <(b) (6) @lindenstrategies.com>
Subject: Re: US LNG to Black Sea via the Bosphorus

Hi, can we go ahead and schedule an initial call? I'm free Friday the 30th after 3:30 Turkish time or next Wednesday also after 3:30... Please let me know.

Stephen Payne
President, Linden Strategies

On Mon, Nov 19, 2018, 7:50 AM William Czajkowski <William.Czajkowski@trade.gov wrote:

> Mr. Stephen Payne
>
> President
>
> Linden Strategies
>
> 5120 Woodway Drive, Suite 5004
>
> Houston, TX 77056
>
> Dear Mr. Payne,
>
> On behalf of Chargé d'Affaires Jeffrey Hovenier, I want to thank you for your letter of November 5, 2018. As I am the U.S. Embassy's Commercial Counselor, Mr. Hovenier asked that I respond to your letter directly.
>
> Your commitment to identifying and delivering a viable, alternative energy source which would provide energy security for Ukraine is one the Administration shares. And, to that end, the U.S. Embassy has on multiple occasions approached the Turkish government regarding the shipment of LNG through the Bosphorus. Our Turkish interlocutors have proven to be well versed on all aspects of the Treaty of Montreux. However, in the past, the Turkish government has cited numerous marine safety concerns which allow them to place limited constraints on sea transport in the area, including the banning of LNG transport ships through the Bosphorus. It is apparent that the Turkish government regularly receives related requests and concerns, as the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken the step to include an explanation of their official position on their website (http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-turkish-straits.en.mfa).

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With this said, I believe it is vital that all interested parties in the U.S. Government and Linden Strategies discuss all possible transport options in detail, including potential alternative routes. I would welcome the opportunity to organize such a discussion. To that end, if you could provide me with your dates/times of availability, I will send out invitations to all interested parties for an introductory call.

Once again, thank you for your correspondence, and I look forward to working with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

William Czajkowski

Commercial Counselor

U.S. Commercial Service

U.S. Embassy, Ankara, Turkey

Email: william.czajkowski@trade.gov

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