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Jul. 30, 2015

Now it's John Koskinen's turn on the hot seat.

On July 27, the Republican-controlled House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform demanded that President Obama remove Koskinen from his position as IRS Commissioner for obstructing its investigation into the "Tea Party scandal." If Obama doesn't oblige, Chairman Jason Chaffetz (Rep.-UT) threatened that the committee will active pursue contempt charges and an impeachment proceeding.

"Mr. Koskinen should no longer be the IRS commissioner," stated Chaffetz. "At best, Commissioner Koskinen was derelict in his duties to preserve agency records. At worst, he and the IRS engaged in an orchestrated plan to hide information from Congress."

At this writing, the Obama administration hasn't responded to the demands, but the IRS issued a prepared statement in defense of its leader. "The record is clear that the IRS and Commissioner Koskinen have been cooperative and truthful with the numerous investigations underway" the statement read. "The agency has produced more than one million pages of documents in support of the investigations, provided 52 current and former employees for interviews and participated in more than 30 Congressional hearings on these issues."

The Tea Party scandal broke in 2013 when it was revealed that staffers in the IRS Tax Exempt Organizations division exerted extra scrutiny on conservative-leaning

groups seeking tax-exempt status. A number of Congressional probes were launched

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Koskinen stepped into the limelight in 2013 when President Obama appointed him to succeed Daniel Werfel, who in turn had replaced Acting IRS Commissioner Steven Miller while the Tea Party scandal unfolded. The current head honcho at the IRS had previously served as the Non-Executive Chairman of Freddie Mac.

The committee summarized its case against Koskinen in a 30-page letter to the president as well as a 10-minute video posted online. Some of the main points include allegations of the IRS' failure to comply with a congressional subpoena, Koskinen's purportedly false testimony regarding the preservation of email records and the tax collection agency's fruitless efforts to provide them to the committee.

Chaffetz claimed that the committee had determined that Lerner's emails could have been recovered, but backup tapes containing nearly 24,000 of the messages were destroyed, despite Koskinen's assurances that records were being preserved and that the agency was using all of its resources to locate the missing emails.

In this current political climate, don't expect the Republicans on the committee to back down from the fight. "The American people will never know all the facts surrounding the agency's targeting of conservative tax-exempt ... groups," said Chaffetz. "This is an unacceptable outcome and one that demands those responsible be held accountable."

IRS

sponsors.

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