

POLITICO

Panel unveiling docs on DOE aid recipients



By **ANDREW RESTUCCIA** | 6/19/12 10:11 AM EDT

An Energy Department employee used a private email address to send confidential information to a company that went on to get a \$1.4 billion partial loan guarantee from the agency, according to one of a series of documents that House Republicans plan to highlight Tuesday.

The documents are the latest effort by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to show that corporate coziness in DOE's clean energy programs has gone beyond Solyndra.

The email (<https://www.politicopro.com/f/?f=9927&inb>) from June 3, 2011, obtained by POLITICO, was sent by Peter O'Rourke, a contractor who served as an adviser to DOE's loan office, to Drew Torbin, vice president of renewable energy for the industrial real estate company Prologis, and Jonathan Plowe, an official at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

"please do not send beyond two of you. this is very important," wrote O'Rourke, using a private Gmail account. "feel free to use the concepts we articulate in your own words, if you don't already have this in your message."

The email included a 13-page presentation outlining the Energy Department's messaging on Prologis's application for a \$1.4 billion guarantee to finance 733 megawatts of rooftop solar generation in 28 states and Washington, D.C., through what the company calls Project Amp. The presentation was marked "confidential treatment requested."

DOE officials said the documents reveal nothing new.

"The department asking a company to verify information about its application or sending them information about their own project is hardly unusual or surprising," the Energy Department said Monday night. "While the documents simply rehash old issues the committee has already covered, they do offer even further proof that the department's decisions about loans were based on a thorough, technical consideration of the facts and merits of the case ? and nothing else."

The department approved the conditional loan guarantee for Project Amp later in June, then finalized the agreement in September. Prologis has said the project is funded with equity from NRG Energy and Prologis as well as debt financing through Bank of America.

POLITICO also obtained **emails from Sept. 21, 2011** (<https://www.politicopro.com/f/?f=9928&inb>) — also uncovered by committee Republicans — that appear to show Prologis and Energy Department officials discussing changes to a document certifying that the company had begun construction. The document alludes to the fact that the project's first phase was originally intended to use Solyndra's solar equipment, before Solyndra went bankrupt last year.

Republicans **have alleged** (<https://www.politicopro.com/story/energy/?id=9357>) that DOE may have backed Project Amp to help Solyndra, but department officials have strongly rejected that claim. Energy Secretary Steven Chu also **denied it**

in February (<https://www.politicopro.com/story/energy/?id=9535>) — saying that, to the contrary, he expressed concern about Prologis's planned reliance on Solyndra because “I didn't know how long Solyndra would be there.”

A GOP congressional source said Monday that the new documents “show that DOE officials were entirely too close with Prologis, giving the company access to pre-decisional information and encouraging the company to make edits to internal documents.”

Committee Republicans are expected to question Prologis co-CEO Walter Rakowich about the email at a **subcommittee hearing** (<http://oversight.house.gov/hearing/the-obama-administrations-green-energy-gamble-part-ii-were-all-the-taxpayer-subsidies-necessary/>) Tuesday.

The hearing is also slated to include testimony from Cogentrix CEO Robert Mancini, NRG CEO David Crane, Ormat Technologies CEO Yehudit Bronicki and Veronique de Rugy, senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

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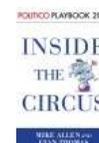
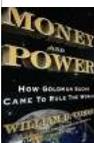
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