



MP for Rimutaka

Minister of Education

Minister of State Services

Leader of the House

Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services

2 May 2018

Suzanne Newton

fyi-request-7496-567c0931@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Suzanne Newton

Official Information Act request

I refer to your Official Information Act (OIA) request transferred to me from Hon Grant Robertson for the following:

I would like to know the full amount of the cost to the New Zealand tax payer for the visit of Ex-President Barack Obama to New Zealand in March 2018.

Included in this, but not exclusive to, I would like to know the full cost of any travel, vehicles, security measures, accommodation, meals, Special Services, time involved in preparation and closing of the visit, NZ Police special services, signage, road closures, special clothing and other such items, wages for extra personnel, payment to staff and/or others involved, price of any gifts, rewards, or any items given to Barack Obama, and/or any person engaged or connect to the visit e.g. John Key, who may have been paid, received gifts, wages, items or such to be part of this event.

In short I wish to know exactly what the cost to New Zealand has been to host an ex-President.

I would also like to know what justification, i.e. financial benefit to New Zealand, this visit is meant to produce. I would like that in a dollar amount, as I am sure New Zealand is not in the habit of giving expensive holidays to the now unemployed without some benefit for ALL New Zealanders.

Your request was transferred to me as the Ministerial Services portfolio includes the Visits and Ceremonial office. The Visits and Ceremonial office is part of the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). I am advised that costs to DIA of the visit to New Zealand of Barack Obama are still being finalised.

It should be noted that the DIA is not the only government agency that incurred costs in relation to former President Obama's visit to New Zealand. As costs for other government agencies will not be held by the Ministerial Services portfolio I am likely to transfer your request to those agencies that I believe will have incurred costs to in relation to President Obama's visit.

I am therefore extending the time limits on your response by 20 working days under section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA as consultations necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit.

A response will now be due to you by 30 May 2018, but should the information be ready before the extended due date it will be provided to you then.

If you have any concerns with the decisions referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'CH', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister Responsible for Ministerial Services