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# John Kerry's son cut business ties with Hunter Biden over Ukrainian oil deal

by Alana Goodman | August 27, 2019 06:30 AM

John Kerry's stepson rushed to play damage control at the State Department after his business partner Hunter Biden cut a deal with an oligarch-owned Ukrainian gas company in 2014, according to internal State Department correspondence obtained by the *Washington Examiner*.

The correspondence adds to the questions about Biden's business activities, which have dogged the 2020 Democratic primary campaign of his father Joe. Hunter Biden's long [history of drug and alcohol abuse](#), which contributed to his divorce and his dismissal from the Navy Reserve, has also attracted unwelcome publicity for the Democratic front-runner.

An email released to the *Washington Examiner* shows that Biden's decision to [join the board of Ukraine's Burisma Holdings](#) sparked immediate concern within his inner circle about the political optics. Biden's father Joe — now vying for the 2020 Democratic Party nomination — was then vice president and overseeing the Obama administration's Ukraine policy.

At the time, Hunter Biden, now 49, and Christopher Heinz, the stepson of then-Secretary of State John Kerry, co-owned Rosemont Seneca Partners, a \$2.4 billion private equity firm. Heinz's college roommate, Devon Archer, was managing partner in the firm. In the spring of 2014, Biden and Archer joined the board of Burisma Holdings, a Ukrainian gas company that was at the center of a U.K. money laundering probe. Over the next year, Burisma reportedly paid Biden and Archer's companies over \$3 million.



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Hours after Biden's board appointment went public on May 13, 2014, Heinz emailed Matt Summers and David Wade, two of his stepfather's top aides at the State Department.

"Apparently Devon and Hunter both joined the board of Burisma and a press release went out today," wrote Heinz. "I cant speak why they decided to, but there was

no investment by our firm in their company."

The email was obtained through a public information request filed by the conservative nonprofit group Citizens United. The organization said the email raises questions about why Heinz was in touch with the State Department about Biden's business dealings.

"This email raises a lot of questions. Why would Chris Heinz distance himself from Hunter Biden's decision to join Burisma's board in an email to John Kerry's senior staff at the State Department?" said Citizens United President David N. Bossie in a statement to the *Washington Examiner*. "It's time for Joe Biden to answer [questions about his family's business](#) in the Ukraine and what his own role was in those dealings."

"These are questions that congressional oversight committees should be demanding answers to," he added.

Heinz's spokesperson told the *Washington Examiner* that he was not involved in the Burisma deal and has not been invested in Rosemont Seneca Partners since 2015.

"Chris Heinz was involved in Rosemont Capital. Through Rosemont Capital, Mr. Heinz owned a minority interest in Rosemont Seneca Partners until 2015," said Heinz's spokesperson Chris Bastardi. "Neither Mr. Heinz, nor any business in which he had an interest, was involved in Burisma."

Heinz was troubled by his partners' decision to join the Burisma board and immediately took steps to end his business relationship with Biden and Archer, according to a source familiar with the situation.

In 2014 and 2015, Burisma paid \$3.4 million to a company called Rosemont Seneca Bohai LLC, [according](#) to the *New York Times*. That company paid Biden up to \$50,000 a month, according to the report. During the same time period, Joe Biden pressured the Ukrainian government to fire its lead prosecutor who was investigating wrongdoing at Burisma, raising questions from critics about whether this was related to his son's position at the gas company.

Biden stepped down from the Burisma board this year, before his father announced his presidential run. Archer was convicted for his role in an unrelated Ponzi scheme last November, but was recently granted a new trial.

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