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Biden Autopen Investigation Faces Scrutiny Over Comer's Digital Signature

July 15, 2025

— Categories: Politics & Government



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Rep. James Comer, Republican of Kentucky and Chair of the House Oversight Committee, has been leading the high-profile investigation into President Joe Biden's reliance on an autopen, a device that automatically replicates a signature, to authorize official documents. While Comer's probe aims to question whether Biden has remained fully engaged in presidential duties, newly surfaced details reveal that Comer himself has routinely used a digital signature on related correspondence.

According to records reviewed by NBC News, Comer sent 16 letters to former Biden administration officials, seeking interviews about the president's use of the autopen. Metadata from these letters shows that the signature affixed was not personally handwritten but rather a digital image inserted electronically. Additional subpoena cover letters sent to former White House physician Dr. Kevin O'Connor and senior adviser Anthony Bernal were signed in the same manner. Although critics have pointed out this apparent contradiction, the Oversight Committee has defended the practice, arguing there is a clear distinction between digital signatures for routine letters and an autopen used for binding executive actions.

A spokesperson for the committee noted that using scanned or electronic signatures is a longstanding practice in Congress, where lawmakers and their staff handle a massive volume of correspondence. The committee emphasized that any legally enforceable subpoenas issued under Comer's authority were signed with a traditional handwritten, or "wet," signature rather than a digital reproduction. This clarification, they argue, separates Comer's actions from what President Donald Trump and his allies have called a "dangerous scandal" in the Biden White House.

The debate over the autopen has become another flashpoint in partisan oversight battles, with Republicans maintaining that the president's frequent delegation of signatures raises legitimate questions about his awareness and involvement in governance. Meanwhile, the White House has dismissed these accusations as "ridiculous and false," asserting that the use of an autopen has precedents under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

While digital signatures and other forms of authorized delegation have become common tools in Washington, critics say the reliance on such measures highlights the growing disconnect between elected officials and their formal responsibilities. Supporters of Comer's investigation argue that transparency and accountability in the highest office demand a closer look, regardless of whether similar practices are widespread in other branches of government.