

JOYCE R. BRANDA  
Acting Assistant Attorney General  
JOSEPH H. HUNT  
Director, Federal Programs Branch  
ANTHONY J. COPPOLINO  
Deputy Branch Director  
JAMES J. GILLIGAN  
Special Litigation Counsel  
james.gilligan@usdoj.gov  
MARCIA BERMAN  
Senior Trial Counsel  
marcia.berman@usdoj.gov  
RODNEY PATTON  
Trial Attorney  
JULIA BERMAN  
Trial Attorney  
U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Division  
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Phone: (202) 616-8480; Fax: (202) 616-8470  
*Attorneys for the Government Defs. in their Official Capacity*

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
OAKLAND DIVISION**

CAROLYN JEWEL, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Case No. 4:08-cv-04373-JSW

**GOVERNMENT DEFENDANTS'  
OPPOSITION TO PLAINTIFFS'  
ADMINISTRATIVE MOTION  
TO STRIKE THE GOVERNMENT'S  
SECRET SUPPLEMENTAL BRIEF**

No hearing scheduled

1 In Plaintiffs' Administrative Motion to Strike the Government's Secret Supplemental  
 2 Brief, ECF No. 297 ("Plaintiffs' Motion" or Pls.' Mot."), Plaintiffs ask the Court to strike the  
 3 Government Defendants' September 29, 2014 classified brief. The Government Defendants  
 4 submitted that brief, along with a classified declaration, to provide the Court further information  
 5 related to Plaintiffs' Motion for Partial Summary Judgment, *see* ECF No. 261, that could not be  
 6 provided in a public filing. *See* Gov't Defs.' Notice of Lodging of the Classified Decl. of  
 7 Miriam P. of the National Security Agency and a Classified Supplement to the Gov't Defs.'  
 8 Opp'n and Cross-Mot. for Partial Summ. J. for *In Camera*, *Ex Parte* Review, ECF No. 287 at 2.  
 9 Specifically, as explained in the Government's public filing, filed concurrently, the Government  
 10 submitted the classified supplement at issue to explain that the Government possesses detailed  
 11 operational information about Upstream collection under FISA Section 702 that is necessary to  
 12 adjudicate Plaintiffs' claim and the Government's defenses thereto, but which is subject to the  
 13 assertion of the state secrets privilege in this case by the Director of National Intelligence  
 14 ("DNI"), and cannot be disclosed without risking exceptionally grave damage to national  
 15 security. *See* Gov't Defs.' Opp'n to Pls.' Mot. for Partial Summ. J. and Cross-Mot. for Partial  
 16 Summ. J. on Pls.' Fourth Amendment Claim, ECF No. 285, at 3–4.<sup>1</sup>

17 Plaintiffs do not seek to strike the classified declaration filed by the Government,<sup>2</sup> just the  
 18 classified brief discussing that declaration. There is no support for Plaintiffs' anomalous position  
 19 that, while the Government may submit classified information to the Court in support of its  
 20 assertion of the state secrets privilege through a declaration, it may not explain to the Court, in a  
 21 classified manner, what role that privileged information plays in the case and, in particular,  
 22 address why a claim cannot be fairly adjudicated without that information. Plaintiffs' apparent

23 <sup>1</sup> In light of the Government's public explanation of the purpose of the submission at issue—to  
 24 explain why national security information subject to the state secrets privilege would be needed  
 25 to litigate Plaintiffs' Fourth Amendment claim (assuming judgment is not granted for the  
 26 Government on the public record) but is properly privileged and excluded from the case—there  
 is no basis for Plaintiffs' speculation that the submission "argues the merits of the plaintiffs'  
 Fourth Amendment claim." Pls.' Mot. at 4.

27 <sup>2</sup> The submission of classified declarations for *in camera*, *ex parte* review is "unexceptional" in  
 28 cases where the state secrets privilege is invoked. *Kasza v. Browner*, 133 F.3d 1159, 1169 (9th  
 Cir. 1998).

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position is that the Court should attempt to glean, based solely on a declaration describing the privileged information, how that protected national security information would impact the case. The Court of Appeals has rejected that view in this very litigation. *See* Order, No. 10-15616, ECF No. 58 (denying the Plaintiffs’ motion to strike the Government’s classified brief). Likewise, Plaintiffs have previously, and unsuccessfully, advanced similar arguments before this Court. *See* Pls.’ Letter, ECF No. 246 (arguing for restrictions on the Government’s submission of classified briefs). As discussed below, there is no basis in law or reason to deprive the Court of the Government’s explanation concerning the impact on the litigation of the need to protect national security information that is properly before the Court through a privilege assertion. Consistent with settled practice, including in this litigation, this Court should deny Plaintiffs’ Motion.

It is well established that the Government may submit classified information, where appropriate, in a brief addressing arguments about the state secrets privilege and its effects on the litigation. Plaintiffs cite no authority to the contrary. Indeed, *Mohamed v. Jeppesen Dataplan, Inc.*, 614 F.3d 1070 (9th Cir. 2010) (*en banc*)—the case upon which Plaintiffs’ argument principally relies, *see* Pls.’ Mot. at 2–4—confirms the importance and propriety of classified briefing in such cases. There, the Court of Appeals noted that “[t]he government’s classified briefing and supporting declarations provide[d] more specific support for the government’s state secrets contentions,” and emphasized that “[t]his information [was] crucial to [the Court’s] decision.” *Jeppesen*, 614 F.3d at 1084 n.6. Thus, rather than prohibiting or restricting such briefing, the Court of Appeals in *Jeppesen* underscored the importance of the Government’s classified briefing.

Consistent with this precedent, the Ninth Circuit has rejected Plaintiffs’ contention, raised in a prior appeal in this case, that *Jeppesen* limits the Government’s ability to submit classified briefing in support of its assertion of the state secrets privilege. *See* Order, No. 10-15616, ECF No. 58 (denying Plaintiffs’ motion to strike). Likewise, the Court of Appeals previously rejected Plaintiffs’ unsupported assertions regarding due process and their reference to “secret law,” *see* Pls.’ Mot. at 4–5. Indeed, Plaintiffs’ argument currently before the Court repeats nearly verbatim

1 much of the argument then rejected by the Court of Appeals. *Compare* Pls.’ Mot. at 2–5, with  
 2 Appellants’ Joint Mot. to Strike the Gov’t’s *Ex Parte, In Camera* Classified Brief, No. 105616,  
 3 ECF No. 35 at 5–12.

4 Like the Court of Appeals, this Court has not accepted Plaintiffs’ previous requests to  
 5 restrict or prohibit classified briefing to explain classified information that is properly before the  
 6 Court. In a letter to the Court, Plaintiffs challenged a previous *ex parte* submission by the  
 7 Government, and “[sought] a formal process to control the government’s submission of *ex parte*,  
 8 *in camera* proceedings.” ECF No. 246 at 1. The Government explained, in response, that the  
 9 Government had consistently complied with the well-established requirements for making  
 10 classified submissions by creating as full a public record as possible before lodging classified  
 11 material for the Court’s *in camera, ex parte* review, and that there was no basis for imposing the  
 12 additional restrictions Plaintiffs sought. *See* ECF No. 267. Thereafter, Judge Walker did not  
 13 impose the procedures Plaintiffs requested. Similarly, in rejecting another challenge to *ex parte*  
 14 submissions by the Plaintiffs raised in their prior *Hepting* action, Judge Walker emphasized that  
 15 “[a]lthough *ex parte, in camera* review is extraordinary, this form of review is the norm when  
 16 state secrets are at issue,” No. 06-672, ECF No. 171 at 5, and did not foreclose the Government  
 17 from submitting a classified declaration *and* a classified memorandum regarding the application  
 18 of the state secrets privilege for *in camera, ex parte* review, *id.* at 7. Indeed, throughout this  
 19 litigation, the Court has accepted for *in camera, ex parte* review, classified briefing by the  
 20 Government, after the Government had, as here, created as full a public record as possible before  
 21 lodging that material. *See, e.g.,* Gov’t Defs.’ Notice of Lodging of Supplemental *In Camera, Ex*  
 22 *Parte* Classified Mem. of Points and Authorities in Support of Mot. to Dismiss and for Summ. J.,  
 23 ECF No. 21; United States’ Notice of Lodging of *In Camera, Ex Parte* Material, No. 06-1791  
 24 (MDL proceedings), ECF No. 255. Thus, Plaintiffs’ Motion is contrary not only to Ninth Circuit  
 25 precedent, but also to the established practice of this Court throughout this litigation.

26 Although Plaintiffs argue for new procedural restrictions based on Section 1806(f) of the  
 27 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, *see* Pls.’ Mot. at 2, 4–5, nothing in Section 1806(f) limits  
 28 the Government’s ability to submit a classified brief for *ex parte* review. Assuming, *arguendo*,

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1 Section 1806(f) displaces the state secrets privilege, it would not apply unless and until Plaintiffs  
 2 can first demonstrate—*without* the benefit of national security information over which the DNI  
 3 has asserted privilege—that they are “aggrieved persons” challenging the lawfulness of  
 4 “electronic surveillance.” *See* Government Defendants’ Supplemental Brief on Threshold Legal  
 5 Issues as Ordered by the Court at the September 27, 2013 Status Conference, ECF No. 167 at 8–  
 6 11. That is, to bring themselves within the reach of Section 1806(f), Plaintiffs must establish that  
 7 they have been targets of or subject to the NSA intelligence-gathering activity they seek to  
 8 challenge; for all of the reasons explained in the Government’s Opposition to Plaintiffs’ Partial  
 9 Motion for Summary Judgment, Plaintiffs cannot make such a showing here. Moreover, the  
 10 procedures set forth in Section 1806(f) would then apply if the Attorney General, in his  
 11 discretion, chose to invoke this provision in the face of a motion by Plaintiff seeking discovery  
 12 of sensitive national security information. And, regardless, nothing in Section 1806(f) limits the  
 13 Government’s ability to submit an *ex parte* brief if that were necessary to explain further to a  
 14 court the basis for a submission under those procedures.<sup>3</sup> In sum, as with the Government’s  
 15 previous *in camera*, *ex parte* submissions related to the assertion of the state secrets privilege in  
 16 this case, Section 1806(f) would not apply to bar the submission of a classified brief for *ex parte*  
 17 review.

18 Nor do the Federal or Local Rules support Plaintiffs’ argument that the Government’s  
 19 submission of its classified brief was improper. Plaintiffs cite Federal Rule of Civil Procedure  
 20 6(c)(1) and Local Rule 7-2 as the bases for their Motion. *See* Pls.’ Mot. at 1. Even if the service  
 21 requirements set forth for written motions in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 6(c)(1) and Civil

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22 <sup>3</sup> *See, e.g., United States v. Abu-Jihaad*, 630 F.3d 102, 130 (2d Cir. 2010), *cert. denied*, 131 S.  
 23 Ct. 3062 (2011) (in applying Section 1806(f) court conducted in camera review not only of the  
 24 challenged orders, applications and materials related to the surveillance but “the government’s  
 25 classified Memorandum in Opposition to the Defendant’s Motion for Suppression of FISA  
 26 Evidence and Motion for Disclosure of FISA Applications, Orders and Related Materials and an  
 27 Adversary Hearing” as well as related classified declarations); *United States v. Mahamud*, 838  
 28 F.Supp.2d 881, 884, 885 (D. Minn. 2012) (applying Section 1806(f), noting the government had  
 submitted a classified memorandum, among other materials, *ex parte*, *in camera*, in opposition to  
 the defendant’s motion to suppress evidence obtained pursuant to FISA); *United States v.*  
*Hussein*, 2014 WL 1682845, at \*1, 4 (S.D. Cal. Apr. 29, 2014) (same); *United States v. Omar*,  
 2012 WL 2357734 (D. Minn. June 20, 2012) (same).

Local Rule 7-2 applied to the supplemental submission at issue here, Rule 6(c)(1) expressly excludes matters which may be heard *ex parte* from that requirement. *See* Fed R. Civ. P. 6(c)(1)(A), (1)(C).

In sum, there is no support for Plaintiffs' argument that the Government may not submit a classified supplement discussing information subject to a state secrets privilege assertion before the Court. For the foregoing reasons, the Court should deny the Plaintiffs' Motion.<sup>4</sup>

Dated: October 28, 2014

Respectfully Submitted,

JOYCE R. BRANDA  
Acting Assistant Attorney General

JOSEPH H. HUNT  
Director, Federal Programs Branch

ANTHONY J. COPPOLINO  
Deputy Branch Director

/s/ Julia Berman  
JAMES J. GILLIGAN  
Special Litigation Counsel  
MARCIA BERMAN  
Senior Trial Counsel  
RODNEY PATTON  
JULIA BERMAN  
Trial Attorneys  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Division, Federal Programs Branch  
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Phone: (202) 616-8480  
Fax: (202) 616-8470

*Attorneys for the Government Defendants  
Sued in their Official Capacities*

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<sup>4</sup> In addition to Plaintiffs' Motion discussed herein, on October 24, 2014, Plaintiffs filed an administrative motion to file under seal their combined reply in support of their motion for partial summary judgment and opposition to the Government Defendants' cross-motion for partial summary judgment, *see* ECF No. 294. The Government Defendants do not oppose the Plaintiffs' request to file their combined reply and opposition under seal.