

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



June 20, 2016

For additional information:

Ladar Levison, Founder, at ladar@lavabitllc.com

Jesse Binnall, Esquire, at jbinnall@harveybinnall.com

Lavabit Files Court Brief Supporting Apple

Alexandria, VA--Lavabit founder Ladar Levison can finally confirm the target of the 2013 investigation, which led to the shutdown of the Lavabit email service, was Edward Snowden. The original case concerned law enforcement's authority to compel the disclosure of an SSL/TLS private key, which belonged to Lavabit, and was used to protect the communications of all 410,000 customers, when only one of those customers was the subject of a criminal investigation. After three years, and five separate attempts, the court has granted Mr. Levison permission to speak freely about the case. The recently delivered court decision unseals the vast majority of the court filings, and releases Mr. Levison from the gag which has limited his ability to discuss the unclassified proceedings which took place in the Eastern District of Virginia court house.

Mr. Levison has consistently relied on the First Amendment in his court filings which sought to remove the gag orders entered against his will. He argued that such orders are an unconstitutional restraint against speech. He plans to use his new found freedom to discuss the case during his presentation on Compelled Decryption at DEF CON 24 in Las Vegas, NV.

"One of the rights guaranteed to Americans, and a cornerstone for a functional democracy, is the freedom to speak the truth," stated Mr. Levison in announcing the court decision. "The Bill of Rights meant to protect opinions, even those unfavorable to government, from any and all legal injunction, including the gag order in this case, is an inalienable right. No American should have to live for three years, gagged, with every word carefully weighed, when such opinions are concerned with such a public and controversial case. I believe the public may only grant its permission to be governed when it knows the means and methods its government uses to protect the body politic. While I pleased that I can finally speak freely about the target of the investigation, I also know the fight to protect our collective freedom is far from over. Which is why I will continue to do everything within my power to protect our right to speak freely and privately when we deem it necessary, and not at the whim of those officials we might seek to criticize."

In order to continue the fight, Mr. Levison is forming the Lavabit Legal Defense Foundation (or "LavaLegal"), a non-profit organization founded to, among other things, protect service providers from becoming complicit in unconstitution activities which seek circumvent digital privacy or impinge upon the freedom to speak. The foundation will be funded by donations from people and organizations all over the world who want to help protect digital privacy and bolster our collective defense against government overreach. Donations can be accepted at the foundation's rally.org page or through bitcoin donations at 1Bqqy3SxZ27ZUogEeiKHYqPsmFwuRTERMu.

###