



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20201

Case No. 2020-00943-FOIA-OS

June 24, 2020

Mr. Austin R. Evers
Executive Director
American Oversight
1030 15th Street, N.W., Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Evers:

This letter is the final response to your April 10, 2020, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. Specifically, you requested the following records: “1. All records reflecting the content of CDC Director Robert Redfield’s communication with HHS Secretary Alex Azar regarding Director Redfield’s phone call on or about January 3, 2020 with George F. Gao, director of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, including any materials shared between Director Redfield and Secretary Azar, and any notes or memoranda memorializing this communication. 2. All records reflecting communications (including emails, email attachments, text messages, messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp), telephone call logs, calendar invitations, calendar entries, meeting agendas, any handwritten or electronic notes taken during any oral communications, summaries of any oral communications, or other materials) between (a) HHS Chief of Staff Brian Harrison and (b) the White House (including communications with email addresses ending @who.eop.gov, @ovp.eop.gov, or @nsc.eop.gov) regarding the novel coronavirus. (Date Range for Record Search: From 1/1/2020 To 1/9/2020).”

Representatives from the Immediate Office of the Secretary (IOS), and the Assistant Secretary for Administration/Office of the Chief Information Officer (ASA/OCIO) conducted a search respectively, and reports there are no records responsive to your request. IOS recommends that you send your request to the Center for Disease Control.

While we believe an adequate search of the appropriate files was conducted for the records requested, you have the right to appeal this finding that no responsive records exist within IOS and ASA/OCIO. By filing an appeal, you preserve your rights under FOIA and give the agency a chance to review and reconsider your request and the agency’s decision.

Your appeal must be mailed within 90 days from the date of receipt of this letter, to:

Ms. Kim Hutchinson
Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Room 729H
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Please clearly mark both the envelope and your letter “Freedom of Information Act Appeal.” You may also e-mail your appeal to: HHS.ACFO@hhs.gov.

If you would like to discuss our response before filing an appeal to attempt to resolve your dispute without going through the appeals process, you may contact the HHS FOIA Public Liaison for assistance at:

HHS FOIA/PA Public Liaison
FOI/Privacy Acts Division
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
Office of the Secretary (OS)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Suite 729H
Washington, DC 20201

Telephone: (202) 690-7453
Fax: (202) 690-8320
E-mail: HHS_FOIA_Public_Liaison@hhs.gov

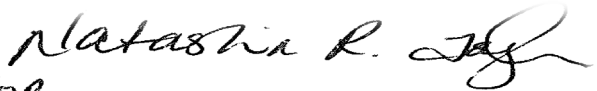
If you are unable to resolve your FOIA dispute through our FOIA Public Liaison, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the Federal FOIA Ombudsman's office, offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. The contact information for OGIS is:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Telephone: 202-741-5770
Toll-Free: 1-877-684-6448
E-mail: ogis@nara.gov
Fax: 202-741-5769

There are no charges in this instance because the billable costs are less than our threshold of \$25.

Sincerely yours,


FOR

Brandon J. Gaylord
Director
FOI/Privacy Acts Division