



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VHA FOIA Office (105HIG)
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

In Reply Refer To: **FOIA Request 20-06229-F**

May 27, 2021

Christine Monahan
American Oversight
1030 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
foia@americanoversight.org

Dear Ms. Monahan:

This letter is the initial agency decision on your April 17, 2020, request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, submitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Central Office FOIA Office requesting all communications (including emails, email attachments, text messages, calendar invitations, calendar entries, meeting notices, meeting agendas, or talking points), as well as any summaries of or notes taken during any oral communications, between (a) the government officials listed in Column A below, and (b) the individuals listed in Column B below:

Column A: Government Officials	Column B: External Individuals
i. Richard Stone, Executive in Charge	viii. Larry Ellison, including anyone communicating on his behalf, such as an executive or special assistant or scheduler
ii. Lawrence Connell, Chief of Staff	ix. Dr. Mehmet Oz
iii. Steven Lieberman, Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health	x. Rudy Giuliani, including anyone communicating on his behalf, including but not limited to Jo Ann Zafonte, Christianne Allen, or Beau Wagner
iv. Lucille Beck, Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Services	xi. Dr. Vladimir Zelenko
v. Valerie	xii. Ben Shapiro
	xiii. Alex Jones
	xiv. Gregory Rigano
	xv. Dr. Ramin Oskoui
	xvi. Dr. Stephen Smith
	xvii. Dr. William Grace
	xviii. Dr. Marc Siegel
	xix. Roberto Mignone, including anyone communicating on his behalf, such as an executive or special assistant or scheduler
	xx. Nitin Saigal
	xxi. Chirag Patel, including anyone communicating on his behalf, such as an executive or special assistant or scheduler

vi. Mattison Brown, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Health, Policy, and Planning vii. Maria Llorente, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Patient Care Services Carter Mecher, Senior Medical Adviser, Liaison to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	xxii. Ken Fisher, including anyone communicating on his behalf, such as an executive or special assistant or scheduler xxiii. Bernard Marcus, including anyone communicating on his behalf, such as an executive or special assistant or scheduler xxiv. Any employee of Fox News, such as Laura Ingraham, Steve Doocy, Brian Kilmeade, Ainsley Earhardt, Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity, and Lou Dobbs, including but not limited to anyone communicating under the domain foxnews.com, foxbusiness.com, newscorp.com, foxinc.com, fox.com, Murdoch.com, newsamerica.com, newscorporation.com xxv. Any employee of OneAmerica News Network, including but not limited to anyone communicating under the domain oann.com xxvi. Any employee of Job Creators Network, including but not limited to anyone communicating under the domain jobcreatorsnetwork.com xxvii. Any employee of Physicians for Reform, including but not limited to anyone communicating under the domain physiciansforreform.org xxviii. Dr. Robin Armstrong
---	--

Your FOIA request was received in my office on April 17, 2020.

After conducting a reasonable search, we have concluded the VHA Central Office does not have records responsive to your request. Courts have determined the reasonableness of an agency's search can depend on whether the agency properly determined where responsive records were likely to be found and searched those locations. [See Iacoe v. IRS, No. 98-C-0466, 1999 WL 675322, at *4 (E.D. Wis. July 23, 1999) (recognizing that agency "diligently searched for the records requested in those places where [agency] expected they could be located")]. Record search inquiries were made to the appropriate office. The VA IT Operations & Services (ITOPS) office conducted a search for documents responsive to your request. The search was conducted on the email accounts of Richard Stone, Lawrence Connell, Steven Lieberman, Lucille Beck, Valerie Mattison Brown, Maria Llorente, and Carter Mecher and searching for all email communications with Larry Ellison, Dr. Mehmet Oz, Rudy Giuliani, Jo Ann Zafonte, Christianne Allen, Beau Wagner, Dr. Vladimir Zelenko, Ben Shairo, Alex Jones, Gregory Rigano, Dr. Ramin Oskoui, Dr. Stephen Smith, Dr. William Grace, Dr. Marc Siegel, Roberto Mignone, Nitin Saigal, Chirag Patel, Ken Fisher, Bernard Marcus, employees of Fox News such as Laura Ingraham, Steve Doocy, Brian Kilmeade, Ainsley Earhardt, Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity, Lou Dobbs or domain foxnews.com, foxbusiness.com, newscorp.com, foxinc.com, fox.com, Murdoc.com,

newsamerica.com, newscorporation.com, any employee of One America News Network or domain oann.com, any employee of Job Creators Network or domain jobcreatorsnetwork.com, any employee of physicians for reform or domain physiciansforreform.org, and Dr. Robin Armstrong. At the conclusion of the search, a “no records” response was provided for responsive records to your request.

Please be advised that you may appeal the “no records” response to:

Office of the General Counsel (024)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20420
Email: ogcfoiaappeals@va.gov

If you should choose to file an appeal, your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted no later than ninety (90) calendar days from the date of this letter. Please include a copy of this letter with your written appeal and clearly state why you disagree with the determinations set forth in this response.

You may also seek assistance and/or dispute resolution services for any other aspect of your FOIA request from VHA’s FOIA Public Liaison and/or Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) as provided below:

VHA FOIA Public Liaison:
Email Address: vhafoia2@va.gov
Phone Number: (877) 461-5038

Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)
Email: ogis@nara.gov
Fax: (202) 741-5769
Mailing address:
Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Thank you for your interest in VA. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (319) 530-7694 or via email at Amber.Heim@va.gov.

Sincerely,

Amber Heim
VHA FOIA Officer