



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Washington DC 20420

March 12, 2019

Mr. Austin Evers
American Oversight
1030 15th NW Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Freedom of Information Act Tracking Number 19-04686-F

Dear Mr. Evers:

This letter responds to your February 14, 2019 request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 5 U.S.C §552 to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Your request was referred to the Office of Finance on March 7, 2019. In your letter, you requested the following:

"All records reflecting communications (including email messages, email attachments, calendar invitations, memoranda or background material for meetings, or handwritten or typed notes taken during meetings) between any political appointees* at your agency and any employee or representative of Ballard Partners, including, but not limited to, any of the following individuals:

- a) Any individual using an email address ending in ballardfl.com,
- b) Brian Ballard,
- c) Sylvester Lukis,
- d) Susan "Susie" Wiles,
- e) Dan McFaul,
- f) Rebecca Benn,
- g) Justin Sayfie,
- h) James "Jamie" Rubin,
- i) Otto Reich,
- j) Raj Shah,
- k) Pam Bondi,
- l) Robert Wexler,
- m) Jose Felix Diaz,
- n) Katherine San Pedro,
- o) Karl Bowers,
- p) Sara Pennington,
- q) Hannah Walters, or
- r) Sara Nuvy."

The Office of Finance has no records responsive to your request. This office has no political appointees as defined in your correspondence.

The Freedom of Information Statute, 5 U.S.C. §552 (A) (4) (a) (II), places all FOIA requesters in one of several categories for fee purposes. The categories of FOIA requesters are commercial use requesters; educational institutions; non-commercial scientific institutions; representatives of the news media; and all other requesters.

We have determined your organization falls within the category of all other requesters and therefore waive any fees.

If you disagree with the determination, please be advised you may appeal to:

Office of General Counsel (024)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420

If you should choose to file an appeal, your appeal must be postmarked no later than ninety (90) calendar dates 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.

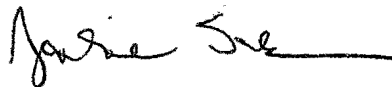
In addition to filing an appeal with the Office of General Counsel regarding this determination, you may also seek assistance regarding your FOIA request from VACO FOIA Public Liaison and or Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) as provided below:

Department of Veterans Affairs
VA FOIA Public Liaison (005R1)
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420
Email: vacofoiaservice@va.gov
Telephone: 877-750-3642
Fax: 202-632-7581

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

This response closes FOIA 19-04686-F. If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-461-6183.

Sincerely,



Julie Schroeder
FOIA Officer
Office of Finance