

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-3000



OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

August 9, 2022

Katherine M. Anthony, Esq.
American Oversight
1030 15th Street NW, B255
Washington, DC 20005
foia@americanoversight.org

RE: Freedom of Information Act Request
FOIA Control No: 19-FI-HQ-01197

Dear Ms. Anthony:

This letter is a second interim response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated and received in the Department's FOIA Branch on May 14, 2019. In your May 14, 2019, FOIA request, you asked for all email communications (including emails including emails, email attachments, and calendar invitations) between (1) Heritage Foundation (@heritage.org) or Charles Koch Institute (@charleskochinstitute.org) and (2) anyone who has held the following positions at HUD:

1. Secretary, Housing and Urban Development
2. Deputy Secretary, Housing and Urban Development
3. Assistant Secretary for Housing, Federal Housing Commissioner
4. Chief of Staff
5. Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Programs
6. Senior Advisor to the Secretary
7. Senior Advisor for Housing and Services
8. Senior Policy Advisor
9. Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research
10. General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Development Research
11. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs
12. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research, Evaluation and Monitoring
13. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Development
14. General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Development Research

In an email dated May 13, 2022, to William Smith of my staff, you modified/narrowed your request for all emails from the following individuals pertaining to the following individuals:

1. Benjamin Carson;
2. Benjamin Hobbs; and
3. John Gibbs.

In an interim response to you dated July 15, 2022, you were provided with 91 pages of responsive records pertaining to item 2 of your request, all email communications between Benjamin Hobbs and the Heritage Foundation (@heritage.org) or Charles Koch Institute (@charleskochinstitute.org), and 13 pages of responsive records pertaining to item 3 of your request, all email communications for John Gibbs and the Heritage Foundation (@heritage.org) or Charles Koch Institute (@charleskochinstitute.org) for the time frame of October 1, 2017, through May 1, 2018.

In response to item 1 of your request for records pertaining to former Secretary Ben Carson's calendar invitations, a search by my knowledgeable staff revealed that the Department has no documents of calendar invitations involving Heritage Foundation (@heritage.org) or Charles Koch Institute (@charleskochinstitute.org) and Secretary Carson for the time frame specified.

Please be advised that a search is ongoing for the remaining portion of item 1 of your request for emails and email attachments, between former Secretary Carson and the Heritage Foundation (@heritage.org) or Charles Koch Institute (@charleskochinstitute.org) for the time frame of October 1, 2017, through May 1, 2018.

I am the official responsible for this determination based on an eDiscovery search for the requested individuals. You may appeal this determination within 90 days from the date of this letter. If you decide to appeal, your appeal should include copies of your original request and this response, as well as a discussion of the reasons supporting the appeal. The envelope should be plainly marked to indicate that it contains a FOIA appeal and be addressed to:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Attention: FOIA Appeals
Office of Ethics and Appeals Law Division
Office of General Counsel
451 Seventh Street, SW, Suite 2130
Washington, DC 20410

Telephone: (202) 708-3815

You may also submit your appeal via email at HUDFOIAappeals@hud.gov.

The FOIA Public Liaison is responsible for increasing transparency, understanding the status of requests, and resolving disputes between you and the agency. If you need assistance in any of these matters, please send an email to FOIA@hud.gov.

In addition, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001
Telephone: 202-741-5770, toll free at 1-877- 684-6448
FAX: 202- 741-5769
Email: at ogis@nara.gov

For your information, your FOIA request, including your identity and any information made available, is releasable to the public under subsequent FOIA requests. In responding to these requests, the Department does not release personal information, such as home address, telephone number, or Social Security number, all of which are protected from disclosure under FOIA Exemption 6. In reviewing the enclosed records HUD has considered the foreseeable harm standard.

If you have any questions regarding your request, you may contact William Smith via email at william.d.smith@hud.gov

Thank you for your interest in the Department's programs and policies.

Sincerely,

**SANDRA
WRIGHT**

Sandra J. Wright
Branch Chief, FOIA Branch
Office of Administration

Digitally signed by: SANDRA WRIGHT
DN: CN = SANDRA WRIGHT C = US O = U.
S. Government OU = Department of Housing
and Urban Development, Office of
Administration
Date: 2022.08.09 11:02:21 -04'00'