



July 3, 2024

VIA EMAIL

Washington County Board of Supervisors
432 East Washington Street
Room 2003
West Bend, WI 53095
jeffrey.schleif@washcowisconsin.gov

Re: Public Records Law Request

Dear Public Records Officer(s):

Pursuant to Wisconsin's public records law, Wis. Stat. §§ 19.31–19.39, American Oversight makes the following request for copies of records.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that your office produce the following records “as soon as practicable and without delay”:¹

1. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) between (a) the Washington County Board of Supervisors officials listed below, and (b) any of the external entities or individuals listed below (including, but not limited to, anyone communicating from the listed email addresses and/or domains).

Washington County Board of Supervisors Officials:

1. Marietta Bailey
2. Christopher Bossert
3. James Burg
4. Brian Gallitz
5. Linda Gurath
6. Robert Hartwig
7. Pamela Konrath
8. Lois Krueger-Gundrum
9. Carroll Merry
10. Ken Mikulec
11. Tina Pridemore
12. Jeffrey Schleif
13. John Schodron

¹ Wis. Stat. § 19.35(4)(a).



14. Jodi Schulteis
15. Mike Schwab
16. Tony Thoma
17. Joseph Vespalec

External Entities and Individuals:

- a. Cleta Mitchell (cleta@cletamitchell.com)
- b. Election Integrity Network (whoscounting.us, electionintegrity.network)
- c. Election Watch (electionwatch.info)
- d. Germantown Village Administrator Steven Kreklow (skreklow@germantownwi.gov)
- e. Germantown Village Clerk Donna Ott (dott@germantownwi.gov)
- f. Harry Wait (harry.wait922@gmail.com, harrytrex@gmail.com, hotgovernment@gmail.com)
- g. Jefferson Davis (davisforpresident@protonmail.com, jeffersondavis784@gmail.com)
- h. Mike Lindell (mypillow.com, frankspeech.com)
- i. Patrick Byrne (deepcapture.com), Mike Roman (mikeroman@protonmail.com), or anyone communicating on behalf of America Project (americaproject.com)
- j. Patriots of Ozaukee County (patriotsofoz.us)
- k. Peter Bernegger (pmbmap123@gmail.com)
- l. Representative Robert Brooks (rep.rob.brooks@legis.wisconsin.gov)
- m. Republican National Committee (gop.com, rnc.org)
- n. Republican Party of Wisconsin (wisgop.org)
- o. Robert Spindell (robert.spindell@wisconsin.gov, cd4.chairman@wisgop.info, rspindell@gottesmancompany.com)
- p. Ron Heuer (ronheuer@gmail.com, wiscjustice@outlook.com)
- q. State Representative Janel Brandtjen (janel@brandtjen.com, janel@glmarketing.com, rep.brandtjen@legis.wisconsin.gov)
- r. State Senator Daniel Knodl (rep.knodl@legis.wisconsin.gov)
- s. Timothy Ramthun (ramthun@hotmail.com)
- t. True the Vote (truethevote.org)
- u. United Sovereign Americans (unite4freedom.com)
- v. Washington County Republican Party (washingtoncountygop.org)
- w. West Bend Clerk Jilline Dobratz (jilline.dobratz@villageofjacksonwi.gov)
- x. West Bend Mayor Joel Ongert (mayor@ci.west-bend.wi.us)
- y. Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty (will-law.org)
- z. Wisconsin Voter Alliance (wisconsinvoteralliance.com)

Please note that American Oversight does not seek, and that part 1 of this request specifically excludes, the initial mailing of news clips or other mass-distribution emails. However, subsequent communications responding to or forwarding such emails are responsive to this request. For example, if a listed official received a mass-distribution news clip email from a listed external entity or individual, that initial email would not be responsive to this request. However, if they forwarded that email to another individual with their own

commentary, that subsequent message would be responsive to this request and should be produced.

2. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) sent by the Washington County Board of Supervisors officials listed below containing any of the key terms listed below.

Washington County Board of Supervisors Officials:

18. Marietta Bailey
19. Christopher Bossert
20. James Burg
21. Brian Gallitz
22. Linda Gurath
23. Robert Hartwig
24. Pamela Konrath
25. Lois Krueger-Gundrum
26. Carroll Merry
27. Ken Mikulec
28. Tina Pridemore
29. Jeffrey Schleif
30. John Schodron
31. Jodi Schulteis
32. Mike Schwab
33. Tony Thoma
34. Joseph Vespalec

Key Terms:

- a. "absentee hours"
- b. "absentee voting hours"
- c. "central count machines"
- d. "central count tabulators"
- e. "high speed tabulators"
- f. "high-speed tabulators"
- g. "early voting hours"
- h. "EVIP hours"
- i. "election audit"
- j. "election initiatives"
- k. "election integrity"
- l. "hand count"
- m. "hand recount"
- n. "hard cases"
- o. "IPAV hours"
- p. "resolution 5"
- q. handcount

In an effort to accommodate your office and reduce the number of potentially responsive records to be processed and produced, American Oversight has

limited part 2 of its request to emails sent by the listed officials. To be clear, however, American Oversight still requests that complete email chains be produced, displaying both sent and received messages. This means, for example, that both a listed official's response to an email containing a listed key term and the initial received message are responsive to this request and should be produced.

3. Records sufficient to identify how the county has allocated or plans to allocate the \$150,000 in funding for election initiatives approved by the Board of Supervisors on May 8, 2024.

Responsive records may include, but are not limited to, line-item budgets or other budget documents, expense reports, purchase orders, contracts, memoranda of understanding or other agreements with Washington County municipalities, and relevant employee payments.

4. Records sufficient to identify the process of valuation for any tabulators or other election equipment that the county has purchased or intends to purchase from Washington County municipalities that have previously used absentee ballot central count locations.

For all parts of this request, please provide all responsive records from April 1, 2024, through the date the search is conducted.

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with Wis. Stat. § 19.35(3)(e), American Oversight respectfully requests that the records be produced without charge. Providing American Oversight with a waiver of fees is in the “public interest” because American Oversight will, in accordance with its organizational mission, make the records available to the public without charge. These disclosures will likely contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the general public.

American Oversight's work is aimed solely at serving the public interest. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, American Oversight does not have a commercial purpose and the release of the information requested is not in American Oversight's financial interest. Rather, American Oversight's mission is to serve the public by promoting transparency in government, educating the public about government activities, and ensuring the accountability of government officials. American Oversight uses the information gathered, and its analysis of it, to educate the public through reports, press releases, or other media.² American Oversight also makes materials it gathers available on its public

² See generally *News*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/blog>; *State Investigations*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/states>; see, e.g., *State Government Contacts with Voting-Restriction Activists*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/state-government-contacts-with-voting-restriction-activists>; *Wisconsin Documents Offer Window into Early Uncertainty over*

website³ and promotes their availability on social media platforms, such as Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).⁴

The public has a significant interest in the county's election administration policies and procedures.⁵ Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the government, including whether and to what extent county officials have communicated about election administration matters with external figures. American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to public records requests publicly available, and the public's understanding of the government's activities would be enhanced through American Oversight's analysis and publication of these records.

American Oversight asks that if its request for a fee waiver is denied in whole or in part, that you contact us prior to incurring any costs.

Guidance Regarding the Search & Processing of Requested Records

American Oversight seeks all responsive records regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics. In conducting your search, please understand the term "record" in its broadest sense, to include any written, typed, recorded, graphic, printed, or audio material of any kind. We seek records of any kind, including electronic records, audiotapes, videotapes, and photographs, as well as letters, emails, facsimiles, telephone messages, voice mail messages and transcripts, notes, or minutes of any meetings, telephone conversations or discussions. Our request includes any attachments to these records. **No category of material should be omitted from search, collection, and production.**

Please search all locations and systems likely to have responsive records regarding official business. **You may not exclude searches of files or emails in the personal custody of your officials, such as personal email accounts.** Emails conducting government business sent or received on the personal account of the authority's officer or employee constitutes a record for purposes of Wisconsin's public records laws.⁶

COVID-19, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/wisconsin-documents-offer-window-into-early-uncertainty-over-covid-19>.

³ *Documents*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/documents>.

⁴ American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 111,500 followers on X (formerly Twitter). American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited July 2, 2024); American Oversight (@weareoversight), X (formerly Twitter), <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited July 2, 2024).

⁵ Charles Benson, *'I Think It's Necessary': Why Washington County is Spending 150k on "Election Integrity"*, TMJ4 News (May 31, 2024, 9:08 PM), <https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/i-think-its-necessary-why-washington-county-is-spending-150k-on-election-integrity>.

⁶ Wisc. Dep't of J., *Wisconsin Public Records Law Compliance Guide*, Oct. 2019, at 3, <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/office-open-government/Resources/PRL-GUIDE.pdf>.

In the event some portions of the requested records are properly exempt from disclosure, please disclose any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions of the requested records.⁷ If it is your position that a document contains non-exempt segments, but that those non-exempt segments are so dispersed throughout the document as to make segregation impossible, please state what portion of the document is non-exempt, and how the material is dispersed throughout the document. If a request is denied in whole, please state specifically that it is not reasonable to segregate portions of the record for release.

Please take appropriate steps to ensure that records responsive to this request are not deleted by the agency before the completion of processing for this request. If records potentially responsive to this request are likely to be located on systems where they are subject to potential deletion, including on a scheduled basis, please take steps to prevent that deletion, including, as appropriate, by instituting a litigation hold on those records.

Conclusion

If you have any questions regarding how to construe this request for records or believe that further discussions regarding search and processing would facilitate a more efficient production of records of interest to American Oversight, please do not hesitate to contact American Oversight to discuss this request. American Oversight welcomes an opportunity to discuss its request with you before you undertake your search or incur search or duplication costs. By working together at the outset, American Oversight and your agency can decrease the likelihood of costly and time-consuming litigation in the future.

Where possible, please provide responsive material in an electronic format by email. Alternatively, please provide responsive material in native format or in PDF format on a USB drive. Please send any responsive material being sent by mail to American Oversight, 1030 15th Street NW, Suite B255, Washington, DC 20005. If it will accelerate release of responsive records to American Oversight, please also provide responsive material on a rolling basis.

We share a common mission to promote transparency in government. American Oversight looks forward to working with your agency on this request. If you do not understand any part of this request, please contact David Kronig at records@americanoversight.org or (202) 897-3915. Also, if American Oversight's

⁷ Wis. Stat. § 19.36(6).

request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact us immediately upon making such a determination.

Sincerely,

/s/ David Kronig

David Kronig

on behalf of

American Oversight