



January 22, 2025

**VIA EMAIL**

Office of the Texas Governor  
Public Information Request  
General Counsel Division  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, TX 78711  
[publicrecords@gov.texas.gov](mailto:publicrecords@gov.texas.gov)

**Re: Public Information Request**

Dear Public Information Officer:

Pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act, as codified at Tex. Gov't Code ch. 552, American Oversight makes the following request for public records.

**Requested Records**

American Oversight requests that your office promptly produce the following:

1. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) between (a) Special Advisor on Border Matters Mike Banks, and (b) any of the external individuals listed below or anyone communicating on their behalf (including, but not limited to, at the listed email addresses).

**External Individuals:**

- a. David Vandenberg ([DavidVandenberg@utexas.edu](mailto:DavidVandenberg@utexas.edu))
  - b. Eddie Ortiz
  - c. Jason Killmeyer ([jason.killmeyer@gmail.com](mailto:jason.killmeyer@gmail.com))
  - d. Joseph Humire ([jmhumire@securefreesociety.org](mailto:jmhumire@securefreesociety.org))
  - e. Mike McDaniel ([FMcdaniel@houstonhidta.net](mailto:FMcdaniel@houstonhidta.net))
  - f. Roy Sikes
  - g. Sheriff Corey Helton ([chelton@leacounty.net](mailto:chelton@leacounty.net))
  - h. Sheriff Jim Skinner ([sheriffskinner@collincountytx.gov](mailto:sheriffskinner@collincountytx.gov))
  - i. Sheriff Mark Dannels ([MDannels@cochise.az.gov](mailto:MDannels@cochise.az.gov))
  - j. Sheriff Roy Boyd ([sheriff@goliadcountytx.gov](mailto:sheriff@goliadcountytx.gov))
  - k. Sheriff Urbino "Benny" Martinez ([umartinez@co.brooks.tx.us](mailto:umartinez@co.brooks.tx.us))
  - l. Tim Poynter ([timpoynter@att.net](mailto:timpoynter@att.net))
2. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) sent by Special Advisor on Border Matters Mike Banks and containing any of the key terms listed below.



Key Terms:

- i. “Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Team”
- ii. “Border Security Work Group”
- iii. “Border Security LE Team”
- iv. MJLET
- v. BSWG

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 this request to emails sent by the specified individuals. To be clear, however, American Oversight still requests that complete email chains be produced, displaying both sent and received messages. This means that both an individual’s response to an email and the initial received message are responsive to this request and should be produced.

3. Records reflecting any materials in the possession of Special Advisor on Border Matters Mike Banks related to the Border Security Work Group of the Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Team.

Responsive records may include, but should not be limited to, information handouts, summary documents, handwritten or typed notes, or any materials produced by the work group.

An email thread referencing the Border Security Work Group of the Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Team is included as Exhibit A to aid in your search.

**For parts 1-3 of this request, please provide all responsive records from April 1, 2024, through the date the search is conducted.**

4. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) **and** text messages (including complete text message threads or conversations) or messages on messaging platforms (such as Signal, Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, X (formerly Twitter) direct messages, Facebook messages, WhatsApp, Telegram, or Parler) between (a) Special Advisor on Border Matters Mike Banks and (b) Thomas “Tom” Homan.

American Oversight is not in a position to provide an email address or phone number for this individual. To the extent that Mr. Banks is unable to provide them, please use the key term “Homan” as a search term.

**For part 4 of this request, please provide all responsive records from January 8, 2025, through the date the search is conducted.**

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.**

In addition, American Oversight insists that your office use the most up-to-date technologies to search for responsive information and take steps to ensure that the most complete repositories of information are searched. American Oversight is available to work with you to craft appropriate search terms. **However, custodian searches are still required; governmental authorities may not have direct access to files stored in .PST files, outside of network drives, in paper format, or in personal email accounts.**

Please search all 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 a governmental authority’s officer or employee constitutes a record for purposes of the Texas Public Information Act.<sup>1</sup>

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. 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 your office 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.

To ensure that this request is properly construed, that searches are conducted in an adequate but efficient manner, and that extraneous costs are not incurred, 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 office can decrease the likelihood of costly and time-consuming litigation in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Tex. Gov’t Code § 552.002(a-2); *see also Adkisson v. Paxton*, 459 S.W.3d 761, 773 (Tex. App. 2015).

Where possible, please provide responsive material in electronic format by email or in PDF or TIF 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.

### **Fee Waiver Request**

In accordance with Tex. Gov't Code § 552.267(a), American Oversight requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records, because such a waiver “is in the public interest because providing the copy of the information primarily benefits the general public.” The requested records are directly related to the work of state officials, with the potential to shed light on potential coordination between local law enforcement and the federal government over immigration issues. This matter is a subject of substantial public interest in Texas.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, release of any responsive records may help the public understand the operations and activities of state officials and is therefore in the public interest.

Release of the requested records will primarily benefit the public.<sup>3</sup> As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, American Oversight does not have a commercial purpose and the release of the requested records is not in American Oversight's financial interest, but is rather in the public interest. American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses governmental authorities provide to public records requests publicly available. As noted, the subject of this request is a matter of public interest, and the public would benefit from an enhanced understanding of the government's activities through American Oversight's analysis and publication of these records. American Oversight's mission is to promote transparency in government, to educate the public about government activities, and to ensure 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. American Oversight also makes materials it gathers available on its public website and promotes their availability on social media platforms, such as Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).<sup>4</sup>

American Oversight has also demonstrated its commitment to the public disclosure of documents and creation of editorial content through numerous substantive analyses

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<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Scott Calvert & Michelle Hackman, *The Local Sheriffs Gearing Up to Help Trump Carry Out Mass Deportations*, Wall Street Journal (Nov. 28, 2024, 9:00 PM), <https://www.wsj.com/us-news/county-sheriffs-trump-immigration-plan-deportations-64c522dd>.

<sup>3</sup> Tex. Gov't Code § 552.267(a).

<sup>4</sup> American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 97,000 followers on X (formerly Twitter). American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited Jan. 21, 2025); American Oversight (@weareoversight), X (formerly Twitter), <https://x.com/weareoversight> (last visited Jan. 21, 2025).

posted to its website.<sup>5</sup> Examples reflecting this commitment to the public disclosure of documents and the creation of editorial content include the posting of records related to the organization’s investigations into misconduct and corruption in state governments;<sup>6</sup> the posting of records related to the Trump Administration’s contacts with Ukraine and analyses of those contacts;<sup>7</sup> posting records and editorial content about the federal government’s response to the Coronavirus pandemic;<sup>8</sup> posting records received as part of American Oversight’s “Audit the Wall” project to gather and analyze information related to the administration’s proposed construction of a barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border, and analyses of what those records reveal;<sup>9</sup> the posting of records related to an ethics waiver received by a senior Department of Justice attorney and an analysis of what those records demonstrated regarding the Department’s process for issuing such waivers;<sup>10</sup> and posting records and analysis of federal officials’ use of taxpayer dollars to charter private aircraft or use government planes for unofficial business.<sup>11</sup>

Accordingly, American Oversight qualifies for a fee waiver. If your office denies our request for a fee waiver, please notify American Oversight of any anticipated fees or costs in excess of \$40 prior to incurring such costs or fees.

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<sup>5</sup> *News*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/blog>.

<sup>6</sup> *State Investigations*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/states>.

<sup>7</sup> *Trump Administration’s Contacts with Ukraine*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-contacts-with-ukraine>.

<sup>8</sup> *See generally The Trump Administration’s Response to Coronavirus*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-response-to-coronavirus>; *see, e.g., CDC Calendars from 2018 and 2019: Pandemic-Related Briefings and Meetings*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/cdc-calendars-from-2018-and-2019-pandemic-related-briefings-and-meetings>.

<sup>9</sup> *See generally Audit the Wall*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/audit-the-wall>; *see, e.g., Border Wall Investigation Report: No Plans, No Funding, No Timeline, No Wall*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/border-wall-investigation-report-no-plans-no-funding-no-timeline-no-wall>.

<sup>10</sup> *DOJ Records Relating to Solicitor General Noel Francisco’s Recusal*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/document/doj-civil-division-response-noel-francisco-compliance>; *Francisco & the Travel Ban: What We Learned from the DOJ Documents*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/francisco-the-travel-ban-what-we-learned-from-the-doj-documents>.

<sup>11</sup> *See generally Swamp Airlines: Chartered Jets at Taxpayer Expense*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/swamp-airlines-private-jets-taxpayer-expense>; *see, e.g., New Information on Pompeo’s 2017 Trips to His Home State*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/new-information-on-pompeos-2017-trips-to-his-home-state>.

## **Conclusion**

We share a common mission to promote transparency in government. American Oversight looks forward to working with your office on this request. If you do not understand any part of this request, have any questions, or foresee any problems in fully releasing the requested records, please contact Chloe Dennison at [records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org) or 202.516.7117. Also, if American Oversight's request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact us immediately upon making such a determination.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Chloe Dennison*

Chloe Dennison  
on behalf of  
American Oversight

# EXHIBIT A

**From:** Dannels, Mark  
**Sent:** Friday, May 31, 2024 11:09 AM  
**To:** Roy Boyd  
**Cc:** Tim Poynter; Mike  
McDaniel; sheriffs Skinner@collincountytx.gov; umartinez@co.brooks.tx.us;

DavidVandenberg@utexas.

**Subject:** edu;michael.banks@gov.texas.gov  
RE: Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Team Meeting

Hello All,

I apologize for my tardiness, been long days in the field and at events causing me to miss these emails/meetings, but rest assure, reading the update, I am in support!

Thanks,

Mark

**From:** Roy Boyd <sheriff@goliadcountytx.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 29, 2024 7:53 PM  
**To:** Roy Boyd <sheriff@goliadcountytx.gov>  
**Cc:** Tim Poynter <timpoynter@att.net>; Mike McDaniel <FMcdaniel@houstonhidta.net>;  
sheriffs Skinner@collincountytx.gov; Dannels, Mark <MDannels@cochise.az.gov>; umartinez@co.brooks.tx.us;

DavidVandenberg@utexas.edu; michael.banks@gov.texas.gov  
**Subject:** Multi-Jurisdictional Law Enforcement Team Meeting

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**CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL\***

Good Evening,

Please see the attached Zoom link for a team meeting on Friday, May 31st at 9:30 am Central Time. I will send out a document tomorrow afternoon for discussion.

Attached is the document from the National Sheriff's Association regarding National Security and the Power Point from Colonel Rios.

Below are some documents that may be of interest as we move forward with this process:

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-border-security-immigration-enforcement-improvements/>

[Executive Order: Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States – The White House \(archives.gov\)](#)

[Managing Illegal Immigration report \(2\).pdf \(cfr.org\)](#)

While we do not need to become bogged down with the minute details at this point in our project, it is important to begin formulating questions that will need to be researched and answered as we move forward. Some of these documents may begin that process for us.

Roy

Topic: Border Security LE Team Zoom Meeting  
Time: May 31, 2024 09:30 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 880 0930 8452  
Passcode: 978692

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One tap mobile

COCHISE COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
OFFICIAL COPY

Meeting ID: 880 0930 8452  
Passcode: 978692