AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

May 8, 2025

**VIA ONLINE PORTAL**

Office of the Boston Mayor
1 City Hall Sq.
Rm. 615
Boston, MA 02201
Via Online Portal

**Re: Public Records Law Request**

Dear Records Access Officer:

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, G.L. c. 66, § 10, American Oversight makes the following request for records.

**Requested Records**

American Oversight requests that the Office of the Boston Mayor produce the following records within business days:

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

   Office of the Boston Mayor Officials:
   i. Michelle Wu, Mayor
   ii. Tiffany Chu, Chief of Staff
   iii. Ricardo Patron, Deputy Chief of Staff

   Key Terms:
   a. sanctuary
   b. "Protecting American Communities"
   c. "criminal alien"
   d. "criminal aliens"

   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 1 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.

2. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) between any of the officials listed above in part 1, and (b) any of the external entities listed below (including the listed domains).

   External Entities:
   a. Office of Management and Budget (omb.eop.gov)
   b. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (cbp.dhs.gov)
   c. U.S. Department of Homeland Security (hq.dhs.gov)
   d. U.S. Department of Justice (usdoj.gov)
   e. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ice.dhs.gov)
   f. White House Office (who.eop.gov)

   Please note that American Oversight does not seek, and that 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. In other words, for example, if an official received a mass-distribution news clip email from the Office of Management and Budget, that initial email would not be responsive to this request. However, if the official forwarded that email to another listed individual with their own commentary, that subsequent message would be responsive to this request and should be produced.

**For parts 1-2 of this request, please provide all responsive records from April 21, 2025, through the date the search is conducted.**

3. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) sent by any of the officials listed above in part 1 and containing any of the key terms listed below.

   Key Terms:
   a. "federal grant"
   b. "federal grants"
   c. "federal fund"
   d. "federal funds"
   e. "federal funding"
   f. "executive order"

   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 3 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.

**For part 3 of this request, please provide all responsive records from April 28, 2025, through May 9, 2025.**

**Fee Waiver Request**

In accordance with G.L. c. 66, § 10(d)(v), American Oversight requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. Disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest because it will likely contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the general public in a significant way. Moreover, the request is primarily and fundamentally for non-commercial purposes.

American Oversight requests a waiver of fees because disclosure of the requested information "is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requestor."[1] The public has a significant interest in the executive order "Protecting American Communities from Criminal Aliens," which targets sanctuary jurisdictions.[2] Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the government, including how local officials plan to respond to the executive order. American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to Public Records Law 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.

This request is primarily and fundamentally for non-commercial purposes.[3] 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. 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).[4]

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

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[1] G.L. c. 66, § 10(d)(v).
[2] *See, e.g.*, Anna Betts, *Trump Signs Executive Order Requiring List of Sanctuary Cities and States*, Guardian (Apr. 28, 2025, 7:00 PM), https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/apr/28/trump-immigration-executive-orders.
[3] *See* G.L. c. 66, § 10(d)(v).
[4] American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 94,900 followers on X (formerly Twitter). American Oversight, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/ (last visited May 5, 2025); American Oversight (@weareoversight), X (formerly Twitter), https://x.com/weareoversight (last visited May 5, 2025).

to its website.[5] Examples reflecting this commitment to the public disclosure of documents and the creation of editorial content include the posting of records and analysis related to the organization's investigations into misconduct and corruption in state governments;[6] posting records and analysis of federal and state governments' responses to the Coronavirus pandemic;[7] posting records received as part of American Oversight's "Audit the Wall" project to gather and analyze information related to the Trump administration's proposed construction of a barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border, and analyses of what those records reveal;[8] and 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.[9]

Accordingly, American Oversight qualifies for a fee waiver.

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[5] *See generally News*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/blog.
[6] *See generally 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; *Georgia's Voting Machines and Election Security*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/georgias-voting-machines-and-election-security.
[7] *See, e.g.*, *The Trump Administration's Response to Coronavirus*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-response-to-coronavirus; *Tulsa Health Officials Initially Estimated Trump Rally Would Directly Lead to 2 to 9 Deaths*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/tulsa-health-officials-initially-estimated-trump-rally-would-directly-lead-to-2-to-9-deaths; *Wisconsin Documents Offer Window into Early Uncertainty over COVID-19*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/wisconsin-documents-offer-window-into-early-uncertainty-over-covid-19; *In the Documents: Florida Health Department Efforts to Suppress Release of Coronavirus Records*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/in-the-documents-florida-health-department-efforts-to-suppress-release-of-coronavirus-records.
[8] *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.
[9] *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.

**Guidance Regarding the Search & Processing of Requested Records**

In connection with its request for records, American Oversight provides the following guidance regarding the scope of the records sought and the search and processing of records:

- Please search all locations and systems likely to have responsive records, regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics.

- Our request for records includes any attachments to those records or other materials enclosed with those records when they were previously transmitted. To the extent that an email is responsive to our request, our request includes all prior messages sent or received in that email chain, as well as any attachments to the email.

- Please search all relevant records or systems containing records regarding agency business. Do not exclude records regarding agency business contained in files, email accounts, or devices in the personal custody of your officials, such as personal email accounts or text messages.

- 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 a request is denied in whole, please state specifically why it is not reasonable to segregate portions of the record for release.[10]

- 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.

[10] *See Champa v. Weston Pub. Sch.*, 473 Mass. 86, 92, 39 N.E.3d 435, 441 (2015) (citing G.L. c. 66, § 10(a)). .

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 of promoting 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 Chloe Dennison at 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