AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

October 7, 2025

VIA ONLINE PORTAL

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
Alexander Watson
1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Ste. 317
Washington, DC 20004
Via Online Portal

Re: D.C. Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear FOIA Officer:

Pursuant to the District of Columbia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), D.C. Code §§ 2-531 et seq., and implementing regulations at 1 DCMR §§ 400 et seq., American Oversight makes the following request for records.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that your office produce the following records within fifteen 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/or anyone communicating on their behalf, such as an assistant, secretary, and/or scheduler, and containing any of the key terms listed below.

   Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development Officials:
   i. Nina Albert, Deputy Mayor
   ii. Adrea Turner, Chief of Staff
   iii. Jamie Scott, Deputy Chief of Staff
   iv. Pam Frentzel-Beyme, Director of Real Estate
   v. Leah Riley, Director of Downtown Innovation
   vi. Sybongile Cook, Director of Destination Development
   vii. Jacque McDonald, Director of Contracts, Procurement and Grants

   Key Terms:
   a. "National Guard"
   b. federalize
   c. federalization
   d. takeover
   e. take-over
   f. "take over"

g. "home rule"
h. "section 740"
i. "sec 740"
j. "sec. 740"
k. "§ 740"

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 requests that complete email chains be produced, displaying both sent and received messages. This means that any message a listed official sent where a key term listed above appears anywhere in the preceding chain is responsive to this request and should be produced.

For part 1 of this request, please provide all responsive records from August 10, 2025, through the date the search is conducted.

2. All formal and informal final impact assessments, reports, or analyses (including memoranda and other written products) prepared by or otherwise provided to the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development regarding the economic impact of the federal takeover of Washington, D.C. and/or deployment of National Guard troops to Washington, D.C., including, but not limited to, the economic impact to tourism, real estate, or business.

For part 2 of this request, please provide all responsive records created, issued, or in effect from August 1, 2025, through the date the search is conducted.

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with D.C. Code § 2-532(b), American Oversight requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. A waiver of fees for this request "is in the public interest because furnishing the information can be considered as primarily benefiting the general public."[1]

The general public has a significant interest in the ongoing presence of federal law enforcement, immigration enforcement, and military personnel in Washington, D.C.[2] Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the D.C. government, including the extent to which local officials coordinated with the White House on the issuance of an executive

[1] D.C. Code § 2-532(b); *see also* DCMR § 408.10.
[2] *See, e.g.*, Emily Davies et al., *Bowser to Provide Indefinite Coordination with Federal Law Enforcement*, Wash. Post, Sept. 2, 2025, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/09/02/bowser-dc-federal-law-enforcement-trump-takeover/.

order ordering indefinite coordination with federal law enforcement and the potential economic impact to Washington, D.C. from the presence of law enforcement.

American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to FOIA requests publicly available, and the general public's understanding of the government's activities would be enhanced 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).[3]

American Oversight has also demonstrated its commitment to the public disclosure of documents and creation of editorial content through numerous substantive analyses posted to its website.[4] 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;[5] 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;[6] posting records received as part of American Oversight's "Audit the Wall" project to gather and analyze information related to the first Trump administration's proposed construction of a barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border, and analyses of what those records reveal;[7] posting records regarding potential self-dealing at the Department of Housing & Urban Development and related analysis;[8] posting records and analysis relating to the

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[3] American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 94,300 followers on X (formerly Twitter). American Oversight, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/ (last visited Oct. 7, 2025); American Oversight (@weareoversight), X (formerly Twitter), https://x.com/weareoversight (last visited Oct. 7, 2025).

[4] *News*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/blog.

[5] *State Investigations*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/states.

[6] *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.

[7] *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.

[8] *Documents Reveal Ben Carson Jr.'s Attempts to Use His Influence at HUD to Help His Business*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/documents-reveal-ben-carson-jr-s-attempts-to-use-his-influence-at-hud-to-help-his-business.

federal government's efforts to sell nuclear technology to Saudi Arabia;[9] and posting records and analysis regarding the Department of Justice's decision in response to demands from Congress to direct a U.S. Attorney to undertake a wide-ranging review and make recommendations regarding criminal investigations relating to the President's political opponents and allegations of misconduct by the Department of Justice itself and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.[10]

Finally, this request is for non-commercial purposes. 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.

Accordingly, furnishing the information sought through this request can be considered as primarily benefiting the general public, and American Oversight thus qualifies for a fee waiver.

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.
- In conducting your search, please understand the terms "record," "document," and "information" in their broadest sense, to include any written, typed, recorded, graphic, printed, or audio material of any kind.
- 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

[9] *Investigating the Trump Administration's Efforts to Sell Nuclear Technology to Saudi Arabia*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigating-the-trump-administrations-efforts-to-sell-nuclear-technology-to-saudi-arabia.
[10] *Sessions' Letter Shows DOJ Acted on Trump's Authoritarian Demand to Investigate Clinton*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/sessions-letter.

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.

- 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. 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 Ben Sparks at records@americanoversight.org or (202) 873-1741. 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/ Ben Sparks
Ben Sparks
on behalf of
American Oversight