



April 24, 2020

VIA ONLINE PORTAL

Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections
130 Peachtree St. SW, Suite 2186
Atlanta, GA 30303
Via Online Portal

Re: Open Records Request

Dear Records Custodian:

Pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Law (O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.), American Oversight makes the following request for records.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that Fulton County produce the following within three business days, or provide a written description of any responsive records with a timetable for their production within three business days:

1. All records reflecting any instructions—including formal or informal guidance documents, decision memoranda, directives, policies, procedures, or policy interpretations, whether or not attached to email or other communications—created, maintained, distributed, utilized, recommended, or received by the Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections regarding absentee voter signature matching or absentee voter signature verification (including, but not limited to, any instructions concerning the handling of missing or mismatched signatures).

American Oversight believes that records containing the terms listed below are likely to be responsive, and requests that your office, at a minimum, employ these search terms to identify responsive records:

Search Terms:

- Mismatch
- Mismatches
- Mismatched
- Match
- Matching
- Signature
- Signatures
- Sign



- Signed
- Signing
- Absentee
- Handwriting
- Pre-rejection
- Prerejection

Please provide all responsive records from March 29, 2019, to the date the search is conducted.

2. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, calendar invitations, and attachments thereto) sent by any of the Fulton County officials listed below regarding voter signature matching or voter signature verification (including, but not limited to, any communications concerning the handling of missing or mismatched signatures).

In an effort to accommodate your agency and reduce the number of responsive records to be processed and produced, American Oversight has limited its request to instructions sent by listed custodians. To be clear, however, American Oversight still requests that complete email chains be produced, displaying the sent messages, the prior received messages, and any subsequent messages in each email chain. This means, for example, that a Fulton County custodian’s response to an email, the initial received message, and any subsequent messages within the same email thread are responsive to this request and should be produced.

Please provide all responsive records from March 29, 2019, to the date the search is conducted.

Fulton County Officials:

- Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections:
 - Director Richard Barron, or anyone communicating on his behalf
 - Registration Chief Ralph Jones
 - Elections Chief Joseph Evans
 - Administration Manager Brenda McCloud

- Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections:
 - Chairperson Mary Carole Cooney
 - Vice Chair Mark Wingate
 - Member Vernetta Nuriddin
 - Member Kethleen Ruth
 - Member Aaron Johnson

Please notify American Oversight of any anticipated fees or costs in excess of \$100 prior to incurring such costs or fees.

In addition, American Oversight insists that Fulton County 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; your office may not have direct access to files stored in .PST files, outside of network drives, in paper format, or in personal email accounts.**

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 Fulton County can decrease the likelihood of costly and time-consuming litigation in the future.

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.

Conclusion

American Oversight is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with the mission 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 Twitter.¹

¹ American Oversight currently has approximately 15,400 page likes on Facebook and 102,200 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, FACEBOOK, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/>

We share a common mission to promote transparency in government. American Oversight looks forward to working with you 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 Khahilia Shaw at records@americanoversight.org or 202.539.6507.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Austin R. Evers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Austin R. Evers
Executive Director
American Oversight

(last visited Apr. 8, 2020); American Oversight (@weareoversight), TWITTER, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited Apr. 8, 2020).