



June 11, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Open Records Custodian
Office of the Secretary of State
214 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
openrecords@sos.ga.gov

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.

Georgia's primary elections were held on June 9, 2020, plagued by long lines and other problems that were expected to delay the reporting of the results of some races for multiple days.¹

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that your office 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 email communications (including emails, complete email chains, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) sent by any official in the Office of the Secretary of State listed below from June 8, 2020, to June 10, 2020:

Secretary of State Officials:

- i. Brad Raffensperger, Secretary of State, or anyone communicating on his behalf (such as an assistant or scheduler)
- ii. Jordan Fuchs, Deputy Secretary
- iii. Chris Harvey, Elections Director, or anyone communicating on his behalf (such as an assistant or scheduler)
- iv. Ted Koval, Deputy Elections Director
- v. Kevin Rayburn, Deputy Elections Director and Deputy General Counsel
- vi. Gabrielle Holland, Senior Elections Attorney
- vii. Jasmine Shannon, Legal Affairs Coordinator

In an effort to accommodate your agency and reduce the number of potentially responsive records to be processed and produced, American Oversight has limited this request to emails sent by the officials in the Office of the Secretary of State listed above. 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 Secretary

¹ See, e.g., Mark Niese, *Vote Counting Continues After Problems in Georgia's Primary*, ATLANTA J. CONST., June 10, 2020, <https://www.ajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/vote-counting-continues-after-problems-georgia-primary/fKGdKvpG5Y93iKCwguzamJ/>.



Raffensperger’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, complete email chains, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) between (a) any official in the Office of the Secretary of State specified below in Column A, and (b) any county official specified below in Column B, from June 8, 2020, to June 10, 2020.

Column A: Secretary of State Officials	Column B: Specified Georgia County Officials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger ii. Deputy Secretary Jordan Fuchs iii. Elections Director Chris Harvey iv. Deputy Elections Director Ted Koval v. Deputy Elections Director and Deputy General Counsel Kevin Rayburn vi. Senior Elections Attorney Gabrielle Holland vii. Legal Affairs Coordinator Jasmine Shannon viii. Anyone communicating on behalf of any of the above officials, such as an administrative assistant or scheduler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Any person communicating on behalf of Cobb County Elections from an email address ending in @cobbelections.org, including, but not limited to, Elections Director Janine Eveler (janine.eveler@cobbelections.org) ii. Any person communicating on behalf of DeKalb County Elections from an email address ending in @dekalbcounty.ga, including, but not limited to, Elections Director Erica Hamilton (ehamilton@dekalbcountyga.gov) iii. Any person communicating on behalf of Fulton County Elections from an email address ending in @fultoncountyga.gov, including, but not limited to, Elections Director Richard L. Barron (richard.barron@fultoncountyga.gov) iv. Any person communicating on behalf of Gwinnett County Elections from an email address ending in @gwinnettcounty.com, including, but not limited to, Elections Director Kristi Royston (Kristi.Royston@gwinnettcounty.com)

3. All text messages sent or received by Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger (including, but not limited to, messages sent or received on personal, non-governmental, or nonofficial devices) regarding official state business, from June 8, 2020, to June 10, 2020.

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

We understand that your office’s capacity may be impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak and response efforts. Should that be the case, we would be happy to discuss potential streamlining or narrowing of our request, reasonable delays in processing this request, or other accommodations. Please feel free to contact us at the telephone number listed in the final paragraph of this letter; we look forward to working with you.

American Oversight seeks all responsive records regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics. 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; 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 the Secretary of State 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.²

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

² American Oversight currently has approximately 15,500 page likes on Facebook and 102,200 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, FACEBOOK, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited June 2, 2020); American Oversight (@weareoversight), TWITTER, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited June 2, 2020).

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 line extending to the left of the first letter.

Austin R. Evers
Executive Director
American Oversight