



Request for Public Records

To request information pursuant to the Mississippi Public Records Act (Miss. Code Ann. § 25-61-1), please fill out the form below and submit it to the Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State, 401 Mississippi Street; Jackson, MS 39201. Requests may be mailed, hand delivered, transmitted via facsimile to (601) 359-1499, or emailed to publicrecords@sos.ms.gov. All requests will be answered within the statutory guidelines of the Mississippi Public Records Act and Administrative Procedures of the Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State.

I. INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL MAKING THE REQUEST

- 1. _____
(NAME/NAME OF ORGANIZATION)
- 2. _____
(PERSONAL/BUSINESS ADDRESS)
- 3. _____
(CITY) (STATE) (ZIP)
- 4. _____
(PERSONAL/BUSINESS TELEPHONE NUMBER)
- 5. _____
(PERSONAL/BUSINESS EMAIL ADDRESS)
- 6. Are you a member of the media? _____ Yes _____ No

II. DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

Please describe the public record you wish disclosed, in detail. If clarification of the request is needed, the requestor will be contacted at the contact information listed above. If necessary, attach an additional page(s) for description.

I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST A STATEWIDE VOTER FILE.

III. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COST

I understand a fee may be charged to cover the direct costs of search, review, and reproduction, as prescribed in the Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State's fee schedule. I understand such costs must be paid prior to the production of the public record. I understand the costs for searching, reviewing, and reproducing the records may exceed initial estimates and I agree to pay additional costs if they exceed the original estimate. Should the request require extensive research or copies, the requestor agrees to allow additional time for processing the requested documentation to be mutually agreed upon by the parties. IMPORTANT: THEFT OR ALTERATION OF STATE RECORDS IS A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY LAW, MISS. CODE ANN. § 25-59-23 (1972).

(DATE OF REQUEST)

(SIGNATURE)



April 22, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Michael Watson
Secretary of State
401 Mississippi Street
Jackson, MS 39201
publicrecords@sos.ms.gov

Re: Mississippi Public Records Act Request

Dear Public Records Officer:

Pursuant to the Mississippi Public Records Act, Miss. Code § 25-61-1 et seq., American Oversight makes the following request for records.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that the Mississippi Secretary of State produce the following records within seven working days:

All email communications (including complete email chains, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar attachments) **sent** by any of the officials in the Mississippi Secretary of State’s Office listed below in Column B, **to** any of the individuals or any employee or representative of any of the entities listed in Column A below, including, but not limited to individuals with the listed email domains.

Column A: External Individuals, Entities, Government Officials	Column B: Mississippi Secretary of State Officials
<p><u>External Entities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mississippi Center for Public Policy (including but not limited to anyone communicating from an email address ending in mspolicy.org) ii. Forest Thigpen iii. Douglas Carswell iv. MPower v. American Family Association (including but not limited to anyone communicating from an email address ending in afa.net) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Secretary of State Michael Watson ii. Executive Assistant Mary Madaline Timbs iii. Chief of Staff Carla Thornhill iv. Communications Director Kendra James v. General Counsel Leigh Janous



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vi. WallBuilders (including but not limited to anyone communicating from an email address ending in wallbuilders.com) vii. Star Parker viii. Former Governor Phil Bryant ix. American Legislative Exchange Council (including but not limited to anyone communicating from an email address ending in alec.org) x. Mississippi Sheriff's Association (mssheriff.org) <p><u>State Representatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> xi. Rep. Dan Eubanks (including, but not limited to, emails sent to deubanks@house.ms.gov) xii. Rep. Shane Barnett (including, but not limited to, emails sent to sbarnett@house.ms.gov) xiii. Sen. Jeff Tate (including, but not limited to, emails sent to JTate@senate.ms.gov) xiv. Sen. Jeremy England (including, but not limited to, emails sent to JEngland@senate.ms.gov) <p><u>Attorney General's Office</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> xv. Attorney General Lynn Fitch xvi. Scott Stewart xvii. William C. Lamar 	
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Please provide all responsive records from January 1, 2021 through date of search.

In an effort to accommodate the Secretary's office and reduce the number of potentially responsive records to be processed and produced, American Oversight has limited its request to emails sent by Secretary of State officials. 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 a listed Secretary of State official's response to an email from any of the listed external entities and the initial received message are responsive to this request and should be produced.

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

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:

- 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.
- 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.

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.

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.

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

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 Hart Wood at records@americanoversight.org or (202) 873-1743.

Sincerely,

/s/ Hart Wood
Hart Wood
on behalf of
American Oversight

¹ American Oversight currently has approximately 15,700 page likes on Facebook and 105,400 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, FACEBOOK, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited April 3, 2021); American Oversight (@weareoversight), TWITTER, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited April 3, 2021).