



June 7, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Representative Ron Hanks
200 E Colfax
RM 307
Denver, CO 80203
Ron.Hanks.house@state.co.us

Office of Legislative Legal Services
State Capitol Building
200 E. Colfax Ave., Room 091
Denver, CO 80203
OLLS.Director@state.co.us

Re: Open Records Act Request

Dear Custodians of Records:

Pursuant to the Colorado Open Records Act, C.R.S. § 24-72-201 et seq., American Oversight makes the following request for records.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that your offices produce the following records within three working days:

1. Records reflecting the expenses and costs incurred by the Colorado House of Representatives or Representative Ron Hanks related to Representative Ron Hanks' trip to Phoenix, Arizona on or around June 10, 2021.¹

To the extent your office has aggregated records sufficient to show all relevant expenses and costs, such as spreadsheets, American Oversight would accept production of such records as sufficient. To the extent your office does not have an aggregated record of these costs, American Oversight requests records reflecting those costs, such as receipts, invoices, charge card or credit card statements, and reimbursement requests.

¹ Andrew Oxford et al, *Arizona Audit of Maricopa County Ballots Has Attracted Out-of-State Visitors. Here's the List*, AZ Republic (June 14, 2021, 6:07 PM), <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona/2021/06/14/arizona-audit-full-list-republican-lawmakers-who-visited-coliseum/7670482002/>.



Relevant expenses may include, but are not limited to, hotel or other lodging costs; costs for air travel, rental car, or other transportation companies; costs incurred for government transportation; the cost of meals or refreshments; and diem payments.

Relevant expenses include costs associated with the travel of Representative Hanks, and of any staff members, family members, or other individuals travelling with him.

2. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, and calendar invitations) sent by Representative Hanks or anyone communicating on his behalf such as a Chief of Staff, scheduler, or assistant, regarding Representative Hanks' trip to the Phoenix, Arizona on or about June 10, 2021 or about the Maricopa county election audit.²

In an effort to accommodate the House of Representatives and the Office of Representative Hanks and reduce the number of potentially responsive records to be processed and produced, American Oversight has limited its request to emails sent by Representative Hanks and his staff. 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 Hanks' response to an email about the trip and the initial received message are responsive to this request and should be produced.

3. Any handouts, agendas, summaries, or notes created by or provided to Representative Hanks as part of or in relation to his trip to Phoenix, Arizona on or about June 9, 2021. Responsive records would include, but not be limited to, electronic or hard-copy documents provided to Representative Hanks during his tour of audit facilities, and formal or informal descriptions or analyses of the Maricopa County election audit created by Representative Hanks or any member of his staff.
4. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, and calendar invitations) between (a) Representative Hanks or anyone communicating on his behalf such as a Chief of Staff, scheduler, or assistant and (b) Christiana Bobb, or anyone communicating on behalf of One American News Network (OANN), including from an email address ending in @oann.com.

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 forwarding such emails are responsive to this request. In other words, for example, if Representative Hanks received a mass-distribution news clip email from OANN that initial email would not be responsive to this request. However,

² For further identifying information, please see *id.*

if Representative Hanks forwarded that email to another individual with his own commentary, that subsequent message would be responsive to this request and should be produced.

Please provide all responsive records from June 1, 2021, through June 14, 2021.

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

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with C.R.S. § 24-72-205(4), American Oversight requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. Disclosure of the requested records will further a “public purpose”³ 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.

The public has a significant interest in a trip taken to Phoenix, Arizona by Representative Hanks. Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the government, including the cost of Representative Hanks’ trip. American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to open records 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. 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 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 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 related

³ C.R.S. § 24-72-205(4).

⁴ American Oversight currently has approximately 15,700 page likes on Facebook and 106,200 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited June 15, 2021); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited June 15, 2021).

⁵ See generally *News*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/blog>.

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.

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

⁶ *State Investigations*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/states>.

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>.

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.

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.

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

Hart Wood
on behalf of
American Oversight