



July 26, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Office of the Chief Inspector General
2103 The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001
cig@eog.myflorida.com

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Public Records Officer:

Pursuant to Article I, section 24(a), of the Florida Constitution, and Florida's public records laws, as codified at Fla. Stat. Chapter 119, American Oversight makes the following request for records.

On May 7, 2021, *Politico* reported that a number of former aides and consultants to Governor Ron DeSantis have a "support group" to discuss the "hardship" they experienced while working for the Governor.¹ American Oversight seeks records with the potential to shed greater light on the experiences of the Governor's staff members.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that the Office of the Chief Inspector General promptly produce the following:

1. All whistleblower complaints submitted to the Office of the Chief Inspector General by current or former employees of the Governor containing allegations that concern the conduct of Governor DeSantis.

To be clear, American Oversight is not asking the Chief Inspector General to release the names of any employees or managers who have submitted a complaint concerning or referencing Governor DeSantis or his conduct, or to release the names of other officials involved in any complaints. American Oversight has no objection to the redaction of names or other identifying information of whistleblowers or officials other than Governor DeSantis from responsive records.

2. Records sufficient to identify the number of whistleblower complaints submitted to the Office of the Chief Inspector General by current or

¹ Tara Palmeri et al., *Scarred DeSantis Staffers Form a Support Group*, *Politico* (May 7, 2021, 6:29AM), <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/playbook/2021/05/07/scarred-desantis-staffers-form-a-support-group-492763>.



former employees of the Governor containing allegations that concern the conduct of Governor DeSantis.

3. All email communications (including email messages, email attachments, calendar invitations, and attachments thereto) sent or received by the Chief Inspector General regarding any potential or submitted whistleblower complaints by current or former employees of the Governor involving allegations that concern the conduct of Governor DeSantis. American Oversight does not object to the redaction of names or other identifying information of whistleblowers or officials other than Governor DeSantis from responsive records.

Please provide all responsive records from January 8, 2019, through the date the search is conducted.

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

American Oversight seeks all responsive records regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics. In conducting your search, please understand the term “record” in its broadest sense, to include any written, typed, recorded, graphic, printed, or audio material of any kind. We seek records of any kind, including electronic records, audiotapes, videotapes, and photographs, as well as letters, emails, facsimiles, telephone messages, voice mail messages and transcripts, notes, or minutes of any meetings, telephone conversations or discussions. 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 agency 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 your agency 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 your agency 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 Taylor Stoneman at records@americanoversight.org or 202-848-1319.

Sincerely,

/s/ Taylor Stoneman
Taylor Stoneman
on behalf of
American Oversight

² American Oversight currently has approximately 15,600 page likes on Facebook and 106,600 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited July 20, 2021); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited July 20, 2021).