



July 21, 2021

VIA ONLINE PORTAL

Deborah R. Snowden
Office of the Executive Secretariat
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street SW, Room 10139
Washington, DC 20410
Via Online Portal

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear FOIA Officer:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and the implementing regulations of your agency, 23 C.F.R. Part 15, American Oversight makes the following request for records.

American Oversight seeks records with the potential to shed light on funding for programs that specifically address youth homelessness.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) produce the following records within twenty business days:

1. Records sufficient to identify the total amount of funding spent by HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC)¹ and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)² programs on homelessness prevention specifically for young people 15 to 25 years old (unaccompanied youth and youth parent families).
2. Records sufficient to identify the prevention services that were provided to young people 18 to 24 years old (unaccompanied youth and youth parents of families) by HUD's CoC and ESG programs.

Please provide all responsive records for each Fiscal Year (FY) from FY 2012 to FY 2021.

¹ If further identifying information concerning the Continuum of Care program is needed, please *see* 24 C.F.R. pt. 578, available at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2017-title24-vol3/xml/CFR-2017-title24-vol3-part578.xmlv>.

² If further identifying information concerning the Emergency Solutions Grant program is needed, please *see* *Emergency Solutions Grants Program*, HUD Exchange, <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/> (last visited Jul. 14, 2021).



To the extent HUD maintains these data in aggregated form, such as in a spreadsheet or within a database or other format that can be readily exported to a spreadsheet, American Oversight requests responsive data in such format, including data dictionary, translation files, or other guide to variables.

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii) and your agency's regulations, American Oversight requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. The subject of this request concerns the operations of the federal government, and the disclosures 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.

American Oversight requests a waiver of fees because disclosure of the requested information is "in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of operations or activities of the government."³ The public has a significant interest in the federal government's efforts to combat youth homelessness.⁴ Records with the potential to shed light on this issue would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the federal government, including whether and to what extent the federal government is focusing resources on unhoused young people. American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to FOIA 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.⁵ 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.⁶

³ 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

⁴ See Teresa Wiltz, *A Hidden Population: Youth Homelessness Is on the Rise*, Stateline, Jul. 7, 2017, <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/07/07/a-hidden-population-youth-homelessness-is-on-the-rise>.

⁵ See 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

⁶ American Oversight currently has approximately 15,500 page likes on Facebook and 106,200 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited July 13, 2021); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited July 13, 2021).

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.⁷ Examples reflecting this commitment to the public disclosure of documents and the creation of editorial content include the posting of records related to the Trump Administration’s contacts with Ukraine and analyses of those contacts;⁸ posting records and editorial content about the federal government’s response to the Coronavirus pandemic;⁹ posting records received as part of American Oversight’s “Audit the Wall” project to gather and analyze information related to the administration’s proposed construction of a barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border, and analyses of what those records reveal;¹⁰ 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;¹¹ and posting records and analysis of federal officials’ use of taxpayer dollars to charter private aircraft or use government planes for unofficial business.¹²

Accordingly, American Oversight qualifies for a fee waiver.

⁷ See generally *News*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/blog>.

⁸ *Trump Administration’s Contacts with Ukraine*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-contacts-with-ukraine>.

⁹ See generally *The Trump Administration’s Response to Coronavirus*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-response-to-coronavirus>; see, e.g., *CDC Calendars from 2018 and 2019: Pandemic-Related Briefings and Meetings*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/cdc-calendars-from-2018-and-2019-pandemic-related-briefings-and-meetings>.

¹⁰ 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>.

¹¹ *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>.

¹² See generally *Swamp Airlines: Chartered Jets at Taxpayer Expense*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/swamp-airlines-private-jets-taxpayer-expense>; see, e.g., *New Information on Pompeo’s 2017 Trips to His Home State*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/new-information-on-pompeos-2017-trips-to-his-home-state>.

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:

- 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.

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 Mehreen Rasheed at foia@americanoversight.org or (202) 848-1320. Also, 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/ Mehreen Rasheed
Mehreen Rasheed
on behalf of
American Oversight