



April 21, 2022

**VIA EMAIL**

Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis  
Attn: Office of Open Government  
400 S. Monroe St., Suite 209  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
[desantis.opengov@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:desantis.opengov@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.

In January 2022, Governor Ron DeSantis presented his own congressional district boundary proposal to Florida legislative leaders. After the legislature opted not to formally consider his proposal, Governor DeSantis indicated he would veto any map that would keep intact Florida's 5th District.<sup>1</sup> In February 2022, Governor DeSantis introduced another congressional district boundary proposal, which again was not formally considered by the legislature.<sup>2</sup> One month later, Governor DeSantis vetoed the Florida legislature's congressional district proposal.<sup>3</sup> Shortly thereafter, legislative leaders announced that they would allow Governor DeSantis to take the lead on drawing new congressional districts.<sup>4</sup> Governor DeSantis then introduced a third proposal, which would create four more Republican-leaning districts.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jane C. Timm, *DeSantis Digs in on Redistricting Fight Against Fellow Republicans*, NBC News (Feb. 14, 2022, 4:31 AM), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/elections/desantis-digs-redistricting-fight-fellow-republicans-rcna15966>.

<sup>2</sup> Kent Justice, *DeSantis Proposes Another Republican-Favored Congressional Map*, WJXT (Feb. 15, 2022, 11:27 PM), <https://www.news4jax.com/news/local/2022/02/16/desantis-proposes-another-republican-favored-congressional-map/>.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Ellen Klas et al., *DeSantis Continues Redistricting Feud with GOP Lawmakers by Vetoing Congressional Map*, Miami Herald (March 29, 2022, 7:01 PM), <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article259897550.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Sam Levine, *Florida Governor DeSantis Given Power to Gerrymander State's Electoral Maps*, The Guardian (Apr. 13, 2022, 2:00 PM), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/apr/13/florida-legislature-governor-ron-desantis-redrawing-electoral-maps>.

<sup>5</sup> Jane C. Timm & Marc Caputo, *DeSantis Draws Congressional Map that would Dramatically Expand GOP's Edge in Florida*, NBC News (Apr. 13, 2022, 11:06PM),



American Oversight seeks records to shed light on Governor DeSantis's efforts to influence Florida's redistricting processes.

### **Requested Records**

American Oversight requests that the Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis promptly produce the following:

1. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments), text messages (including complete text message threads or conversations), and messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat, Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp) sent or received by any of the Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis personnel listed below regarding redistricting in Florida.

#### **Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis Personnel:**

- i. Ron DeSantis, Governor
- ii. James Uthmeier, Chief of Staff
- iii. J. Alex Kelly, Deputy Chief of Staff
- iv. Taylor Schrader, Director of Executive Staff
- v. Taryn Fenske, Director of Communications
- vi. Christina Pushaw, Press Secretary
- vii. Savannah Kelly Jefferson, Director of External Affairs
- viii. Ryan Newman, General Counsel
- ix. Stephanie Kopelousos, Director of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs
- x. Chris Spencer, Director of Policy & Budget
- xi. Drew Meiner, Senior Advisor
- xii. Any Executive Office of the Governor employee involved in the drafting or finalization of any congressional district boundary proposals

For part 1 of this request, 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 General Counsel Ryan Newman received a mass-distribution news clip email referencing Florida's congressional redistricting processes, that initial email would not be responsive to this request. However, if General Counsel Newman forwarded that email to another individual with his own commentary, that subsequent message would be responsive to this request and should be produced.

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<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/elections/desantis-draws-congressional-map-dramatically-expanding-gops-edge-flor-rcna24317>.

2. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments), text messages (including complete text message threads or conversations), and messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat, Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp) between (a) any of the Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis personnel listed above in Part 1, and (b) any of the Florida Legislative members or their staff listed below (including, but not limited to, at the listed email addresses).

Florida Legislative Members and Staff:

- i. Rep. Tom Leek ([Thomas.Leek@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Thomas.Leek@myfloridahouse.gov) or [tleek@foundationrp.com](mailto:tleek@foundationrp.com)), or Legislative Aide Stephanie Benedict ([Stephanie.Benedict@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Benedict@myfloridahouse.gov))
- ii. Rep. Randy Fine ([Randy.Fine@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Randy.Fine@myfloridahouse.gov) or [randy@voterandyfine.com](mailto:randy@voterandyfine.com)), or Legislative Aide Anna Budko ([Anna.Budko@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Anna.Budko@myfloridahouse.gov))
- iii. Rep. Tyler Sirois ([Tyler.Sirois@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Tyler.Sirois@myfloridahouse.gov) or [tylersiroisfl@gmail.com](mailto:tylersiroisfl@gmail.com)), or Legislative Aide Angelique Rinaldi ([Angelique.Rinaldi@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Angelique.Rinaldi@myfloridahouse.gov))
- iv. Rep. Kaylee Tuck ([Kaylee.Tuck@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Kaylee.Tuck@myfloridahouse.gov), [kayleetuck@gmail.com](mailto:kayleetuck@gmail.com), or [kaylee@kayleetuck.com](mailto:kaylee@kayleetuck.com)), or Legislative Aide Michael Johnsen ([Michael.Johnsen@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Michael.Johnsen@myfloridahouse.gov))
- v. Leda Kelly, Staff Director – Redistricting Committee ([Leda.Kelly@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Leda.Kelly@myfloridahouse.gov))
- vi. Donna Ellerkamp, Administrative Lead – Redistricting Committee ([Donna.Ellerkamp@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Donna.Ellerkamp@myfloridahouse.gov))
- vii. Sen. Ray Rodrigues ([rodrigues.ray.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:rodrigues.ray.web@flsenate.gov) or [rodrigues.ray@flsenate.gov](mailto:rodrigues.ray@flsenate.gov)), Secretary Alexander Quinones ([quinones.alexander@flsenate.gov](mailto:quinones.alexander@flsenate.gov)), or Legislative Assistants Krissy Kulavic ([kulavic.krissy@flsenate.gov](mailto:kulavic.krissy@flsenate.gov)) and Timothy Morris ([morris.timothy@flsenate.gov](mailto:morris.timothy@flsenate.gov))
- viii. Sen. Jennifer Bradley ([bradley.jennifer.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:bradley.jennifer.web@flsenate.gov), [bradley.jennifer@flsenate.gov](mailto:bradley.jennifer@flsenate.gov), or [jennifer@votejenniferbradley.com](mailto:jennifer@votejenniferbradley.com)), or Legislative Assistants Katelyn Heffley ([heffley.katelyn@flsenate.gov](mailto:heffley.katelyn@flsenate.gov)), Mary Lee ([lee.mary@flsenate.gov](mailto:lee.mary@flsenate.gov)), and Tonya Shays ([shays.tonya@flsenate.gov](mailto:shays.tonya@flsenate.gov))
- ix. Sen. Doug Broxson ([broxson.doug.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:broxson.doug.web@flsenate.gov), [broxson.doug@flsenate.gov](mailto:broxson.doug@flsenate.gov), or [doug@dougbroxson.com](mailto:doug@dougbroxson.com)), Secretary Victoria Bell ([bell.victoria@flsenate.gov](mailto:bell.victoria@flsenate.gov)), or Legislative Assistants Janice Gilley ([gilley.janice@flsenate.gov](mailto:gilley.janice@flsenate.gov)) and Hal George ([george.hal@flsenate.gov](mailto:george.hal@flsenate.gov))
- x. Sen. Aaron Bean ([bean.aaron.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:bean.aaron.web@flsenate.gov), [bean.aaron@flsenate.gov](mailto:bean.aaron@flsenate.gov), or [aaron@aaronbean.com](mailto:aaron@aaronbean.com)), or Legislative Assistants Chad Corcoran ([corcoran.chad@flsenate.gov](mailto:corcoran.chad@flsenate.gov)), Chesten Goodman ([goodman.chesten@flsenate.gov](mailto:goodman.chesten@flsenate.gov)), Dee Alexander ([alexander.dee@flsenate.gov](mailto:alexander.dee@flsenate.gov)), and Henry Mahler ([mahler.henry@flsenate.gov](mailto:mahler.henry@flsenate.gov))

- xi. Sen. Gayle Harrell ([harrell.gayle.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:harrell.gayle.web@flsenate.gov), [harrell.gayle@flsenate.gov](mailto:harrell.gayle@flsenate.gov), or [gharrell@gayleharrell.com](mailto:gharrell@gayleharrell.com)), or Legislative Assistants Ann Bolduc ([bolduc.ann@flsenate.gov](mailto:bolduc.ann@flsenate.gov)), Carrie Lira ([lira.carrie@flsenate.gov](mailto:lira.carrie@flsenate.gov)), and Karen Sweeney ([sweeney.karen@flsenate.gov](mailto:sweeney.karen@flsenate.gov))
  - xii. Jay Ferrin, Staff Director – Committee on Reapportionment ([ferrin.jay@flsenate.gov](mailto:ferrin.jay@flsenate.gov))
  - xiii. Danna Ivey, Committee Administrative Assistant – Committee on Reapportionment ([ivey.danna@flsenate.gov](mailto:ivey.danna@flsenate.gov))
3. All email communications (including emails, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments), text messages (including complete text message threads or conversations), and messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat, Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp) between (a) any of the Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis personnel listed above in Part 1, and (b) any of the external individuals listed below or anyone communicating on behalf of any of the organizations listed below (including, but not limited to, at the listed email addresses and domains).

External Parties:

- i. Adam Kincaid, Guy Harrison, Scott Walker, Jason Torchinsky ([jtorchinsky@hvjt.law](mailto:jtorchinsky@hvjt.law) or [jtorchinsky@holtzmanvogel.com](mailto:jtorchinsky@holtzmanvogel.com)), Gail Gitcho, Lauren Bryan, Mike Pompeo, Chris Christie, Karl Rove, or anyone communicating on behalf of the National Republican Redistricting Trust or National Republican Redistricting PAC
- ii. Fair Lines America or the Fair Lines Foundation
- iii. Steve Bannon
- iv. Republican Party of Florida Chair Joe Gruters ([joegruters@gmail.com](mailto:joegruters@gmail.com) or [gruters.joe@flsenate.gov](mailto:gruters.joe@flsenate.gov)), Vice Chair Christian Ziegler ([christian@christiangop.com](mailto:christian@christiangop.com) or [ctiegle@scgov.net](mailto:ctiegle@scgov.net)), Secretary Kristy Banks, or Assistant Secretary Clint Pate
- v. Pat Bainter, Dan Ball, Matt Pesek, or anyone communicating on behalf of Data Targeting Inc. (@datatargeting.com)
- vi. National Republican Congressional Committee (@nrcc.org)
- vii. Republican State Leadership Committee (@rslc.gop)
- viii. John Morgan, or anyone communicating on behalf of Applied Research Coordinates
- ix. Clark Bensen, or anyone communicating on behalf of PoliData (@polidata.org)
- x. Adam Foltz

Please provide all responsive records from March 7, 2022, 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 fee.

Please search all locations and systems likely to have responsive records regarding official business. **You may not exclude searches of files or emails in the personal custody of your officials, such as personal email accounts.** Emails or texts conducting government business sent or received on the personal account of the government official constitutes a record for purposes of Florida's public records laws.<sup>6</sup>

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.

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<sup>6</sup> *Cf. State v. City of Clearwater*, 863 So. 2d 149, 154 (Fla. 2003) (“The determining factor is the nature of the record, not its physical location.”).

## 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.<sup>7</sup>

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](mailto:records@americanoversight.org) or (202) 848-1319.

Sincerely,

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

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<sup>7</sup> American Oversight currently has approximately 15,720 page likes on Facebook and 118,100 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited Apr. 21, 2022); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited Apr. 21, 2022).