



February 27, 2020

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Laquisha Persak  
Public Records Coordinator  
Florida Senate  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
[publicrecordsrequests@flsenate.gov](mailto:publicrecordsrequests@flsenate.gov)

**Re: Public Records Request**

Dear Public Records Officer:

Pursuant Article 1, Section 24 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.

**Requested Records**

American Oversight requests that your office promptly produce the following:

All e-mail communications (including complete email chains, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) between (a) the officials listed below, and (b) William (Bill) Helmich ([bill@helmichconsulting.com](mailto:bill@helmichconsulting.com)).

Officials:

- Sen. Joe Gruters
- Sen. Jeff Brandes
- Sen. Lizbeth Benacquisto
- Sen. Anitere Flores
- Sen. David Simmons
- Sen. Travis Hutson
- Sen. Dennis Baxley
- Sen. Oscar Braynon
- Anyone serving as an Assistant, Scheduler, or Chief of Staff, or similar role to the senators listed above

Please provide all responsive records from January 1, 2019, to 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 terms “records,” and “documents,” in their 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 office 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 office 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.<sup>1</sup>

We share a common mission to promote transparency in government. American Oversight looks forward to working with your office 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 Christine H. Monahan at [records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org) or (202) 869-5244.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Austin R. Evers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Austin R. Evers  
Executive Director  
American Oversight

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<sup>1</sup> American Oversight currently has approximately 15,500 page likes on Facebook and 101,800 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, FACEBOOK, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited Feb. 18, 2020); American Oversight (@weareoversight), TWITTER, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited Feb. 18, 2020).