



November 19, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Speaker Robert Cupp
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street, 14th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
Rep4@ohiohouse.gov

Brad Young, House Clerk
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215
Brad.Young@ohiohouse.gov

Christine Morrison, Majority Caucus Chief of Staff
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215
Christine.Morrison@ohiohouse.gov

Re: Public Records Act Request

Dear Speaker Cupp, House Clerk Young, and Majority Caucus Chief of Staff Morrison

Pursuant to the Ohio Public Records Act (PRA), Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43, and other applicable Ohio law, American Oversight makes the following request for records.

Public reporting has indicated that Senate Majority Caucus Budget Director Ray DiRossi and House Majority Caucus Finance Director Blake Springhetti developed the legislative district boundary proposals that were eventually approved by the Ohio Redistricting Commission.¹ American Oversight seeks records concerning Ohio's state and congressional redistricting processes with the hope of shedding light on the important exercise.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that the Ohio House of Representatives, Office of Speaker Cupp, and House Majority Caucus promptly produce the following records from House Majority Caucus Finance Director Blake Springhetti:

¹ Jeremy Pelzer, *Depositions of Key Players in Ohio Redistricting Lawsuits Give a Peek into a Seemingly One-Sided Process*, The Plain Dealer (Oct. 26, 2021, 2:24PM), <https://www.cleveland.com/open/2021/10/depositions-of-key-players-in-ohio-redistricting-lawsuits-give-a-peek-into-a-seemingly-one-sided-process.html>.



1. A complete copy (including any attachments) of any contract, amendment, memorandum of understanding, or other written agreement regarding external entities providing services relevant to the state or congressional redistricting processes, including, but not limited to, agreements with providers of map drawing software, consultants, advisors, or legal counsel.

This request should be interpreted to include any copies of contractual documents pertaining to redistricting in possession of Finance Director Springhetti, including those to which the Ohio House of Representatives, the Ohio Redistricting Commission, Finance Director Springhetti, or House Speaker Cupp are not party.

2. A complete copy of any unpublished formal or informal guidance, directives, memoranda, criteria, or other policy document pertaining to redistricting.
3. Any district boundary proposals produced by any member of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, any Ohio Redistricting Commission staff member, any entity commissioned or contracted by the Ohio Redistricting Commission or the Ohio General Assembly, or House Majority Caucus Finance Director Blake Springhetti, as well as any related data analyses. Please note that this request does not seek electoral district maps or community of interest maps submitted as public comment by members of the public.
4. Any records containing assessments, interpretations, or opinions concerning data from the 2020 Census or the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS).
5. Any records containing assessments, interpretations, or opinions concerning past election results.
6. Any records containing assessments, interpretations, or opinions concerning political party affiliation data, racial demographic data, or present incumbency.
7. Records sufficient to identify the redistricting-related roles or responsibilities of any member of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, any Ohio Redistricting Commission staff member, or any entity commissioned or contracted by the Ohio Redistricting Commission or the Ohio General Assembly for redistricting-related work, including House Majority Caucus Finance Director Blake Springhetti.
8. Records reflecting any training materials used to instruct any member of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, any Ohio Redistricting Commission staff member, or any entity commissioned or contracted by the Ohio Redistricting Commission or the Ohio General Assembly for redistricting-related work,

including House Majority Caucus Finance Director Blake Springhetti, in their roles or responsibilities.

9. Any records containing any formal or informal appraisal of or comment on any content or public comment submitted to the Ohio Redistricting Commission, House Speaker Robert Cupp, or the Ohio General Assembly by members of the public.

For all parts of this request, please provide all responsive records from January 1, 2021, through the date the request is received by your offices.

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

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. For instance, if the request seeks “communications,” please search all locations likely to contain communications, including relevant hard-copy files, correspondence files, appropriate locations on hard drives and shared drives, emails, text messages or other direct messaging systems (such as iMessage, WhatsApp, Signal, or Twitter direct messages), voicemail messages, instant messaging systems such as Lync or ICQ, and shared messages systems such as Slack.
- In conducting your search, please understand the terms “record,” “document,” and “information” 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 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 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.² 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.

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.

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.³

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

² Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(B)(1).

³ American Oversight currently has approximately 15,600 page followers on Facebook and 108,900 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited Nov. 9, 2021); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited Nov. 9, 2021).

understand any part of this request, please contact Sarah Colombo at records@americanoversight.org or (202) 869-5244.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sarah Colombo
Sarah Colombo
on behalf of
American Oversight