



March 7, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Senator Duey Stroebel
18 South, State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707
Sen.Stroebel@legis.wisconsin.gov

Michael Queensland
Senate Chief Clerk
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707
Michael.Queensland@legis.wisconsin.gov

Re: Public Records Law Request

Dear Senator Stroebel and Chief Clerk Queensland:

Pursuant to Wisconsin's public records law, Wis. Stat. §§ 19.31–19.39, American Oversight makes the following request for copies of records.

Records previously produced to American Oversight by the Office of Senator Duey Stroebel indicate that Senator Stroebel was scheduled to participate in an “Election Integrity Meeting” with former Department of Homeland Security director and former Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli on September 27, 2021.¹

American Oversight seeks records concerning the content of Senator Stroebel's meeting with Ken Cuccinelli.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that the Office of Wisconsin Senator Duey Stroebel produce the following records “as soon as practicable and without delay”:²

1. All records reflecting the substance of Senator Stroebel's meeting with Ken Cuccinelli that took place on or around September 27, 2021, including, but not limited to: complete calendar invitations; meeting agendas; talking points; formal or informal meeting notes, readouts, transcripts, or other

¹ American Oversight, *Wisconsin Senate 2021 Calendar Entries for Specific Legislators* at 177, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21273791-wisconsin-senate-2021-calendar-entries-for-specific-legislators#document/p178>.

² Wis. Stat. § 19.35(4)(a).



records of the meeting's content; and records shared during or in connection with the meeting.

Responsive records include, but are not limited to, electronic or hard-copy records (a) provided to Senator Stroebel in connection with the meeting with Ken Cuccinelli, or (b) created by Senator Stroebel.

2. All email communications (including emails, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and attachments thereto) and text message threads/conversations between (a) Senator Stroebel, or anyone communicating on his behalf (including, but not limited to, Chief of Staff John Soper, Legislative Assistant Mark Radcliffe, or Legislative Assistant Patrick Kanarowski) and (b) Ken Cuccinelli (including, but not limited to, at ktc21968@gmail.com or any email address ending in @americarenewing.com), anyone communicating on Cuccinelli's behalf (such as an assistant or scheduler), or Matt Batzel (identified as "Matt Betzel" on Senator Stroebel's calendar) (including, but not limited to, at 920-917-5860).
3. All email communications (including emails, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and attachments thereto) and text messages sent or received by Senator Stroebel, or anyone communicating on his behalf (including, but not limited to, Chief of Staff John Soper, Legislative Assistant Mark Radcliffe, or Legislative Assistant Patrick Kanarowski) containing the search term "Cuccinelli".

Please provide all responsive records from August 1, 2021, through the date the search is conducted.

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with Wis. Stat. § 19.35(3)(e), American Oversight respectfully requests that the records be produced without charge. Providing American Oversight with a waiver of fees is in the "public interest" because American Oversight will, in accordance with its organizational mission, make the records available to the public without charge. These disclosures will likely contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the general public.

American Oversight's work is aimed solely at serving the public interest. 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. Rather, American Oversight's mission is to serve the public by promoting transparency in government, educating the public about government activities, and ensuring 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.³ American Oversight also makes materials it gathers available on its public

³ See generally *News*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/blog>; *State Investigations*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/states>; see,

website⁴ and promotes their availability on social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter.⁵

The public has a significant interest in the Wisconsin legislature’s communications regarding election integrity.⁶ Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the government, including whether and to what extent outside individuals may have influenced state legislators on matters related to election integrity. American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to public records 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.

American Oversight asks that if its request for a fee waiver is denied in whole or in part, that you contact us prior to incurring any costs.

Guidance Regarding the Search & Processing of Requested Records

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.**

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 conducting

e.g., State Government Contacts with Voting-Restriction Activists, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/state-government-contacts-with-voting-restriction-activists>; *Wisconsin Documents Offer Window into Early Uncertainty over COVID-19*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/wisconsin-documents-offer-window-into-early-uncertainty-over-covid-19>.

⁴ *Documents*, American Oversight, <https://www.americanoversight.org/documents>.

⁵ American Oversight currently has approximately 15,700 page likes on Facebook and 117,800 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited Mar. 7, 2022); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited Mar. 7, 2022).

⁶ Laurel White, *Wisconsin’s GOP-Backed Election Investigation Expanded Over the Holidays*, Wis. Public Radio (Jan. 3, 2022, 3:15 PM), <https://www.wpr.org/wisconsins-gop-backed-election-investigation-expanded-over-holidays>.

government business sent or received on the personal account of the authority's officer or employee constitutes a record for purposes of Wisconsin's public records laws.⁷

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.⁸ 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 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.

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 Sarah Colombo at records@americanoversight.org or (202) 869-5244. Also, if American Oversight's

⁷ Wisc. Dep't of J., *Wisconsin Public Records Law Compliance Guide*, Oct. 2019, at 3, <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/office-open-government/Resources/PRL-GUIDE.pdf>.

⁸ Wis. Stat. § 19.36(6).

request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact us immediately upon making such a determination.

Sincerely,

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