



June 7, 2023

**VIA EMAIL**

Ian McGaughey  
County Administration Bldg.  
198 S. Main St.  
Yuma, AZ 85364  
[Ian.McGaughey@yumacountyaz.gov](mailto:Ian.McGaughey@yumacountyaz.gov)

**Re: Public Records Request**

Dear Public Records Officer:

Pursuant to the Arizona Public Records Law, A.R.S. §§ 39-121 et seq., American Oversight makes the following request for records.

**Requested Records**

American Oversight requests that your office promptly produce the following records:

All electronic communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, text messages, or messages on messaging platforms, such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp) between (A) Yuma County Board of Supervisors member Darren Simmons, and (B) any of the external individuals or entities listed below, including, but not limited to, at the suggested email addresses or domains.

In the case of emails and texts, the search should include those sent or received from the specified officials' personal accounts and/or devices if they were used to conduct official business, as well as those sent from their official email addresses or government-issued devices.

Please provide all responsive records from November 3, 2020, through December 31, 2021.

**External Individuals & Entities:**

1. Anyone communicating from the America Project, including anyone communicating from an email address ending in [americaproject.com](http://americaproject.com) or [theamericaproject.com](http://theamericaproject.com)
2. Catherine Engelbrecht, or anyone communicating from an email address ending in [truethevote.org](http://truethevote.org) or [truethevote.com](http://truethevote.com)
3. Draza Smith ([drazasmith@protonmail.com](mailto:drazasmith@protonmail.com), [drazasmith@gmail.com](mailto:drazasmith@gmail.com))
4. David Clements ([davidkclements13@protonmail.com](mailto:davidkclements13@protonmail.com))
5. Erin Clements (née Hughs) ([erin.hughs@yahoo.com](mailto:erin.hughs@yahoo.com))



6. Gregg Phillips ([gregg@patriotgames.com](mailto:gregg@patriotgames.com), [gregg@opsec.group](mailto:gregg@opsec.group)) or anyone communicating from an email address ending in opsec.group
7. Jeff O'Donnell ([theloneraccoon@protonmail.com](mailto:theloneraccoon@protonmail.com)), or anyone communicating from an email address ending in ordros.com
8. Jim Hoft ([midwestjim@charter.net](mailto:midwestjim@charter.net)), or anyone communicating from an email address ending in gatewaypundit.com
9. Jordan Conradson ([jordanconradson@gmail.com](mailto:jordanconradson@gmail.com))
10. Jovan Hutton Pulitzer ([jovanhuttonpulitzer@gmail.com](mailto:jovanhuttonpulitzer@gmail.com))
11. Kelli Ward ([kelli@kelliward.com](mailto:kelli@kelliward.com), [drkelliward@gmail.com](mailto:drkelliward@gmail.com))
12. Liz Harris ([lizharrismba@gmail.com](mailto:lizharrismba@gmail.com), [lizharris@cox.net](mailto:lizharris@cox.net), [liz@lizharrisrealty.com](mailto:liz@lizharrisrealty.com))
13. Mark Finchem ([mfinchem@azleg.gov](mailto:mfinchem@azleg.gov), [markfinchem@me.com](mailto:markfinchem@me.com), [markfinchem@protonmail.com](mailto:markfinchem@protonmail.com))
14. Seth Keshel ([skeshel@gmail.com](mailto:skeshel@gmail.com), [skeshel@protonmail.com](mailto:skeshel@protonmail.com))
15. Shelby Busch ([shelby.b@libertyunitedcoalition.com](mailto:shelby.b@libertyunitedcoalition.com), [wethepeopleaz@protonmail.com](mailto:wethepeopleaz@protonmail.com), [shelbywpaa@protonmail.com](mailto:shelbywpaa@protonmail.com))
16. Steve Montenegro ([steve@coronamconsulting.com](mailto:steve@coronamconsulting.com), [stevemontenegro@gmail.com](mailto:stevemontenegro@gmail.com), [stevemontenegro@protonmail.com](mailto:stevemontenegro@protonmail.com))
17. Tim Griffin, or anyone communicating from an email address ending in thomasmoresociety.org

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 one of the listed officials received a mass-distribution news clip email from an email address ending in gatewaypundit.com, that initial email would not be responsive to this request. However, if they forwarded that email to another individual with their own commentary, that subsequent message would be responsive to this request and should be produced.

### **Statement of Noncommercial Purpose**

This request is made for noncommercial purposes. American Oversight seeks records regarding efforts to undermine public confidence in elections in Arizona.<sup>1</sup> Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the government, including whether or to what extent Arizona public officials have communicated with external entities and individuals elevating baseless narratives regarding the security of elections.

Because American Oversight is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, this request is not in American Oversight's financial interest and is not made for a commercial purpose. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> See Informing Democracy, *Democracy Under Threat: A Spotlight on 204 Officials Who Could Undermine Our Elections*, Apr. 20, 2023, <https://www.informingdemocracy.org/research-library/democracy-under-threat>.

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>2</sup>

Because this request is made for noncommercial purposes, American Oversight requests that any fees charged in connection with processing this request be limited to copying and postage charges, if applicable.<sup>3</sup> Please notify American Oversight of any anticipated fees or costs in excess of \$100 prior to incurring such costs or fees.

### **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.
- 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.
- If any records are withheld in full or in part, pursuant to A.R.S. § 39-121.01(D)(2), please provide an index of records or categories of records that

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<sup>2</sup> American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 112,900 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited June 6, 2023); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited June 6, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> A.R.S. § 39-121.01(D)(1); *see also Hanania v. City of Tucson*, 128 Ariz. 135, 624 P.2d 332 (Ct. App. 1980). Furthermore, because this request is for noncommercial purposes, additional fees provided for under A.R.S. § 39-121.03(A) are not applicable and should not be assessed.

have been withheld and the reasons the records or categories of records have been withheld.

- 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.
- 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 Ben Sparks at [records@americanoversight.org](mailto:records@americanoversight.org) or (202) 873-1741.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Ben Sparks*

Ben Sparks  
on behalf of  
American Oversight