



June 22, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Public Records Liaison Officer
Florida Division of Emergency Management
2555 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399
records@em.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.

Requested Records

American Oversight requests that your office promptly produce the following:

1. All records sent to or received from Vertol Systems Company, ARS Global Emergency Management, or GardaWorld Federal Services, including to or from any employee, representative, attorney, agency, or other individual or entity (such as a sub-contractor) acting on behalf of such entities.

Responsive records should include, but not be limited to:

- a. All contracts, memoranda of understanding, or other agreements between the listed entities and FDEM;
 - b. All deliverables provided to FDEM by the listed entities;
 - c. Reviews or written authorizations provided to the listed entities;
 - d. Cost estimates or quotes submitted by the listed entities;
 - e. Invoices submitted by the listed entities for payment;
 - f. FDEM approvals of payments for services rendered;
 - g. Research or planning documents;
 - h. Passenger manifests, situation reports, or after-action reports;
 - i. Any other documents related to the planning, preparation, and execution of any programs to transport or relocate migrants
2. Any proposed sub-contracts submitted by Vertol Systems Company, ARS Global Emergency Management, or GardaWorld Federal Services and/or any records related to the review or approval of sub-contracts as part of Florida's program of transporting or relocating migrants to other states (also known as "The Unauthorized Alien Transport Program" and hereafter referred to as the "Migrant Transportation Program").



3. All records related to the monitoring of contractors or sub-contractors as part of the Migrant Transportation Program, including any assessments of contractor or sub-contractor performance, FDEM analyses of cost estimates, quotes, or invoices submitted for payment by the contractors or sub-contractors, or other reports created by FDEM related to the Migrant Transportation Program.
4. All media inquiries to Migrant Transportation Program contractors or subcontractors (including, but not limited to, Vertol Systems Company, ARS Global Emergency Management, or GardaWorld Federal Services) submitted to the Florida Division of Emergency Management Communications Office for response, including any formal or informal records related to guidance provided to contractors or subcontractors about responding to media inquiries or public records requests.
5. Any document purporting to be a waiver or consent form signed by migrants as part of the Migrant Transportation Program, including, but not limited to, any forms signed by individuals flown on the chartered flights to Sacramento¹ on or about June 2, 2023, and June 5, 2023, as part of the Migrant Transportation Program.
6. All directives, guidance documents, recommendations, or other records received from the Florida Governor's Office related to the Migrant Transportation Program.

For all parts of this request, please provide all responsive records from March 1, 2023, 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.

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.**

¹Trần Nguyễn and Olga R. Rodriguez, *California Officials: Florida Picked Up Asylum-Seekers on Texas Border and Flew Them to Sacramento*, Associated Press, June 5, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/migrants-dropped-off-california-texas-florida-2ea4ea9cc6e976e97358c64bcae164f4>.

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.²

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.

Section 119.12 Notice

This document provides written notice identifying American Oversight's public records request to your agency's custodian of public records in compliance with Section

² *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.").

119.12(1)(b) of the Florida Statutes. Should your agency fail to comply with its obligations under Florida's public records laws, American Oversight may be prepared to file suit to enforce the provisions of Fla. Stat. Chapter 119.

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 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 or (202) 848-1319.

Sincerely,

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

³ American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 113,200 followers on Twitter. American Oversight, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/> (last visited June 15, 2023); American Oversight (@weareoversight), Twitter, <https://twitter.com/weareoversight> (last visited June 15, 2023).