



CITIZENS FOR
RESPONSIBILITY &
ETHICS IN WASHINGTON

February 24, 2021

BY EMAIL: FOIA@usss.dhs.gov

FOIA Officer
United States Secret Service
Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Branch
245 Murray Lane, SW Building T-5
Washington, D.C. 20223

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear FOIA Officer:

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (“CREW”) makes this request for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) regulations.

Specifically, CREW requests all records reflecting the use and amount of government funds expended on security and any other services for former president Donald J. Trump’s 13 children and grandchildren, dating from January 21, 2021 to February 21, 2021.

CREW also requests all records reflecting the use and amount of government funds expended on security and any other services for former president Donald J. Trump’s 13 children and grandchildren at Trump businesses such as Mar-a-Lago, Bedminster, and Doral dating from January 21, 2021 to February 21, 2021.

Please search for responsive records regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics. We seek records of any kind, including paper records, electronic records, audiotapes, videotapes, photographs, data, and graphical material. Our request includes without limitation all correspondence, letters, emails, text messages, facsimiles, telephone messages, voice mail messages, and transcripts, notes, or minutes of any meetings, telephone conversations, or discussions. Our request also includes any attachments to emails and other records, as well as those who were cc’ed or bcc’ed on any emails.



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If it is your position any portion of the requested records is exempt from disclosure, CREW requests that you provide it with an index of those documents as required under *Vaughn v. Rosen*, 484 F.2d 820 (D.C. Cir. 1973). If some portions of the requested records are properly exempt from disclosure, please disclose any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions of the requested records. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(b). 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. See *Mead Data Central v. U.S. Dep't of the Air Force*, 566 F.2d 242, 261 (D.C. Cir. 1977).

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A) and DHS regulations, CREW requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. The subject of this request concerns the operations of the federal government, and the disclosures likely will contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by CREW and the general public in a significant way. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii). Moreover, the request primarily and fundamentally is for non-commercial purposes. See, e.g., *McClellan Ecological v. Carlucci*, 835 F.2d 1282, 1285 (9th Cir. 1987).

During Donald J. Trump's presidency, members of his family including his children and grandchildren were entitled to Secret Service protection, but on one of Trump's last days in office, he took the unusual step of extending their protection for six months after his presidency. On January 20, 2021 *Washington Post* reported that Trump had extended taxpayer funded protection, at no cost to him or his family, for 13 of his children and grandchildren.¹

¹ Leonning, Carol and Nick Miroff. Trump extended Secret Service protection to his adult children and three top officials as he left office. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-extended-secret-service-protection-for-13-members-of-his-family-as-he-left-office/2021/01/20/31ef3e9e-5b3c-11eb-b8bd-ee36b1cd18bf_story.html



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While there is nothing wrong with the family of a president receiving protection from the Secret Service, it is fair for taxpayers to have questions about why the protection was extended beyond Trump's time in the White House, and how much of the spending associated with the extension is occurring at Trump family businesses.

Donald Trump's family has a history of undertaking travel and recreation that ends up costing the American people hundreds of thousands of dollars--from the security costs for President Trump's family to go on international business trips, to the cost of golf cart rentals for the Secret Service to protect the president when he is golfing.^{2 3} During Trump's presidency, CREW discovered that the Trump family was taking twelve times the number of protected trips than the Obama family did.⁴ That means that in six months of additional protection, the Trump family could certainly run up a significant bill. If the American people are footing the bill, they deserve to know exactly how much it is costing them.

CREW is a non-profit corporation, organized under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. CREW is committed to protecting the public's right to be aware of the activities of government officials, to ensuring the integrity of those officials, and to highlighting and working to reduce the influence of money on politics. CREW uses a combination of research, litigation, and advocacy to advance its mission. CREW intends to analyze the information responsive to this request and to share its analysis with the public through reports, press releases, or other means. In addition, CREW will disseminate any documents it acquires from this request to the public through its website, www.citizensforethics.org. The release of information obtained through this request is not in CREW's financial interest.

CREW further requests that it not be charged search or review fees for this request pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II) because CREW qualifies as a

² Libowitz, Jordan, [CREW Gets Trump Family Secret Service Spending Documents](http://www.citizensforethics.org/crew-gets-trump-family-secret-service-spending-documents/). Available at: <http://www.citizensforethics.org/crew-gets-trump-family-secret-service-spending-documents/>

³ Rohrlich, Justin, Trump's golf cart rental expenses set to surpass \$500,000, Quartz, May 29, 2019 available at: <https://qz.com/1629811/trumps-golf-cart-rental-expenses-set-to-surpass-500000/>

⁴ Honl-Stuenkel, Linnaea and Walker Davis. [The Trump family is taking 12x more protected trips than the Obama family](http://www.citizensforethics.org/reports-investigations/crew-investigations/trump-family-travel-12x-obama-family/). Available at: <http://www.citizensforethics.org/reports-investigations/crew-investigations/trump-family-travel-12x-obama-family/>



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member of the news media. *See Nat'l Sec. Archive v. U.S. Dep't of Defense*, 880 F.2d 1381, 1386 (D.C. Cir. 1989) (holding non-profit a "representative of the news media" and broadly interpreting the term to include "any person or organization which regularly publishes or disseminates information to the public").

CREW routinely and systematically disseminates information to the public in several ways. CREW's website receives tens of thousands of page views every month. The website includes blog posts that report on and analyze newsworthy developments regarding government ethics, corruption, and money in politics, as well as numerous reports CREW has published to educate the public about these issues. In addition, CREW posts documents it receives under the FOIA on its website, and those documents have been visited hundreds of thousands of times.

Under these circumstances, CREW satisfies fully the criteria for a fee waiver.

Conclusion

If you have any questions about this request or foresee any problems in fully releasing the requested records, please contact me at (202) 408-5565 or lhonl-stuenkel@citizensforethics.org. Also, if CREW's request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact our office immediately upon making such a determination.

Where possible, please produce records in electronic format. Please send the requested records to me at lhonl-stuenkel@citizensforethics.org. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Linnaea Honl-Stuenkel

Digital Strategist