



CITIZENS FOR  
RESPONSIBILITY &  
ETHICS IN WASHINGTON

August 20, 2021

BY ONLINE PORTAL: [DHS Public Access Link](#)

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Mail Stop 0190  
ATTN: CRCL FOIA Officer  
Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. AVE SE  
Washington, DC 20528-065

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 U.S. Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") regulations.

Specifically, CREW requests all records and communications from January 1, 2021 to the present concerning DHS's Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships ("CP3"), including without limitation any communications with DHS program offices about CP3.

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.

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). 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. 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).



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Please be advised that CREW intends to pursue all legal remedies to enforce its right under the FOIA to access these documents. Accordingly, because litigation reasonably is foreseeable, DHS should institute an agency-wide preservation hold on documents potentially responsive to this request.

### **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).

Countering Violent Extremism (“CVE”) and Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Program (“TVTP”), DHS’s previous grant programs for national security and preventing violent extremism, have been met with concern over their effectiveness and disproportionate impact on racial and religious communities. A 2017 Government Accountability Office report on CVE stated that “it was not able to determine if the United States is better off today than it was in 2011 as a result of these tasks.”<sup>1</sup> CVE was later updated and renamed TVTP, which continued to employ unsuccessful and harmful methods. Recognizing the flaws in TVTP, President Biden promised to end the program during his 2020 presidential campaign in order to “confront discriminatory policies that single out Arab Americans and cast entire communities under suspicion.”<sup>2</sup> CP3 has been marketed as an overhaul of TVTP and CVE, but given this history it is unclear if that will be true in practice. The requested records would provide a clearer picture for the American public of what has been included in the updated program, and whether CP3 has made necessary changes or still continues the same harmful practices of CVE and TVTP.

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

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<sup>1</sup> [Counteracting Violent Extremism: Actions Needed to Define Strategy and Assess Progress of Federal Efforts](https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-17-300.pdf), April 2017, available at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-17-300.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> [Joe Biden and the Arab American Community: A Plan for Partnership](https://joebiden.com/joe-biden-and-the-arab-american-community-a-plan-for-partnership/), *Joe Biden for President*, 2021, available at <https://joebiden.com/joe-biden-and-the-arab-american-community-a-plan-for-partnership/>.



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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](http://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 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 blogposts 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 the documents it receives under the FOIA on its website, which has 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 Hajar Hammado at [hhammado@citizensforethics.org](mailto:hhammado@citizensforethics.org). Where possible, please produce records in electronic format. Please send the requested records to Hajar Hammado at [hhammado@citizensforethics.org](mailto:hhammado@citizensforethics.org). Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Anna Selbrede  
Policy Intern