



May 31, 2022

Governor Greg Abbott
Texas Capitol
1100 Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701
(512) 463-2000
publicrecords@gov.texas.gov

Re: Public Information Act Request

Dear FOIA Officer:

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (“CREW”) submits this request for records pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act/Texas Government Code Chapter 552.

Specifically, CREW requests all records from May 24, 2022 to May 31, 2022 regarding Governor Greg Abbott’s planned attendance at the NRA-ILA Leadership Forum in Houston, Texas on May 27, 2022. The request includes, but is not limited to, discussions with NRA representatives, deliberation within the governor’s office, and input from constituents about attending the event. Please also search for all records regarding the event, whether they relate to the governor’s speaking role or not.

The above request excludes agency records consisting solely of news articles, press clippings, and other publicly-available material, so long as the records include no accompanying discussion by agency officials

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, and anyone who was cc’ed or bcc’ed on any emails.

Fee Waiver Request

CREW requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. Disclosure of the requested records is in the public interest because it will likely contribute

to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the general public in a significant way. Furthermore, the request is primarily and fundamentally for non-commercial purposes.

On May 24, 2022, a shooter killed nineteen students and two teachers at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas. The shooting took place just three days ahead of an annual NRA meeting taking place across the state in Houston. That conference planned to feature several elected officials as speakers.¹ Shortly after the shooting, two Texan members of Congress changed their plans to attend.² On the day before he was scheduled to speak, Governor Abbott announced he would not attend either, and would instead deliver prerecorded remarks.³

The requested records will shed light on internal discussion within the governor's office about attending the event, the NRA's position on him joining, and the decision to drop out.

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 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 investigations 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 through public records requests on its website.

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 wdavis@citizensforethics.org.

¹ Davis Siders and Olivia Beavers, Republicans pledge allegiance to a hobbled NRA, *Politico*, May 25, 2022, available at <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/25/nra-republicans-texas-shooting-trump-00035260>.

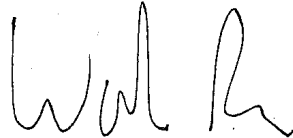
² *Id.*

³ Andrew Zhang, Greg Abbott, Dan Patrick cancel in-person NRA convention appearances in wake of Uvalde mass shooting, *Texas Tribune*, May 26, 2022, available at <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/05/26/greg-abbott-nra-ualde/>.

Also, if CREW's request for a fee waiver is denied, 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 wdavis@citizensforethics.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walker Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Walker Davis
Deputy Research Director