

September 23, 2026

Department of Veterans Affairs
Freedom of Information Act Services (005R1C)
811 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear FOIA Officer:

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington ("CREW") submits this request for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and United States Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") regulations.

Specifically, CREW requests the following records created from November 5, 2024, to September 23, 2026:

All communications containing the following key words:

- "Elon"
- "Musk" (whole word only, to avoid false matches with Muskogee VAMC)
- "Antonio Gracias"
- "Will McGinley" OR "William McGinley" OR "Bill McGinley"
- "Steve Davis"
- "Department of Government Efficiency" OR "DOGE"
- "Donald Park"
- "Riley Sennott" OR "Sennott"
- "David Malcher" OR "Malcher"
- "Sahil Lavingia" OR "Sahil" OR "Lavingia"
- "Christopher Roussos" OR "Roussos"
- "Justin Fulcher" OR "Fulcher"
- "Cary Volpert" OR "Volpert"
- "Payton Rehling" OR "Rehling"
- "Jon Koval" OR "Koval"
- doge.eop.gov
- "munchable"

The VA's search will be of the following individuals as custodians:

Priority 1

- Justin Fulcher

- Sahil Lavingia
- Christopher Rousso
- Cary Volpert
- Payton Rehling
- Jon Koval
- Doug Collins
- Paul Lawrence
- Christopher Syrek
- Curtis Cashour
- Lavin Gartland
- Macaulay Porter
- Darrell Owens
- Michael D. Parrish
- Tracey Therit

Priority 2

- 2025 and 2026 acting CIOs
- Pete Kasperowicz
- Jennifer Burch
- Danielle Runyan
- Gary Shatswell
- Phillip W. Christy
- Jeffrey C. Neill
- Samuel J. Robinson
- Richard F. Topping
- John J. Rychalski
- Edward J. Murray
- Mark Englebaum
- Cassandra M. Law
- Patricia Ross
- Glenn Johnson
- Mary Lynn Poplin
- Kathleen Oddo
- Lourdes Tiglao
- Jacqueline Hayes Byrd
- Debra Walker
- Dr. Mariela Roca
- James Albino
- Dr. Lynda Davis

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.

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).

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

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A) and agency 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 *id.* § 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).

On November 13, 2024, President-elect Donald Trump announced the formation of the "Department of Government Efficiency" ("DOGE").¹ The announcement stated that Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy would lead DOGE and that its mission would be to "pave the way for [Trump's] administration to dismantle Government Bureaucracy, slash excess regulations, cut wasteful expenditures, and restructure Federal Agencies."² Musk and Ramaswamy explained their vision for DOGE in a piece that they published in the Wall Street Journal.³ Within hours of his inauguration, President Trump issued an executive order that established DOGE as a component of the Executive Office of the President ("EOP"), dedicated to implementing the President's "DOGE agenda." Since then, Musk and DOGE personnel have wielded extraordinary power to drastically change the functions, staffing, and missions of federal departments and agencies by terminating and suspending thousands of employees, slashing agency budgets and programs and cancelling contracts.

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

¹ @realDonaldTrump, X (Nov. 13, 2024), <https://x.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1856658569124262092>.

² *Id.*

³ Elon Musk & Vivek Ramaswamy, *Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy: The DOGE Plan to Reform Government*, WSJ (Nov. 20, 2024), https://www.wsj.com/opinion/musk-and-ramaswamy-the-doge-plan-to-reform-government-supreme-court-guidance-end-executive-power-grab-fa51c020?mod=hp_opin_pos_0.

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 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 disseminates information obtained through FOIA to the public in several ways. For example, CREW's website receives hundreds 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. These reports frequently rely on government records obtained through FOIA. CREW also posts the documents it obtains through FOIA 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 email [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] or call (202) 408-5565. 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 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] or by mail to CREW Staff, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, 1331 F St. NW, Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20004.

Sincerely,

Kayvan Farchadi
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in
Washington (CREW)