

February 11, 2020  
MRUFOIA.Requests@usdoj.gov

## **Re: Freedom of Information Act Request**

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, and the implementing regulations of your agency,<sup>1</sup> Accountable.US requests access to and copies of correspondence of employees in the Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General and Department of Justice, Office of Legal Counsel to or from Roger Stone or referencing the terms listed below, between February 9, 2020 and the date this FOIA is processed:

- “Roger”
- “Stone”
- “RJS” OR “R.J.S.”

“Correspondence” should include but not be limited to: emails, email attachments, text messages, telephone call logs, calendar invitations/entries, meeting notices, meeting agendas, informational material, talking points, any handwritten or electronic notes taken during any responsive communications, summaries of any responsive communications, or other materials reflecting communications sent to, from, carbon copying (CC), or blind carbon copying (BCC) all relevant individuals.

If possible, we would prefer to receive this information electronically via e-mail at RPTFOIAS@accountable.us. Alternatively, we prefer PDF files on a USB drive or CD/DVD sent by mail to Accountable.US, 1919 M St. NW, Suite 450, Washington, DC 20036. If you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to call me at 202-449-4367.

## **Fee Waiver Request**

Accountable.US requests a waiver of fees because its request is in the public interest.<sup>2</sup> Alternatively, Accountable.US requests “news media” status such that it only must pay duplication fees after the first 100 pages.<sup>3</sup>

Fee waiver is appropriate because the disclosure of the requested information is “in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding” of government operations and is not “primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.” The disclosure of the information sought under this request will document and reveal the operations of the federal government, including how public funds are spent and how officials conduct the public’s business. It will thereby significantly increase the public’s understanding of these issues. And it will do so on issues for which there is significant and ongoing public interest, namely the DOJ’s reported upcoming changes to its sentencing recommendation for Roger Stone.<sup>4</sup>

Alternatively, limitation of the fees charged to Accountable.US via recognition of Accountable.US’s “media status” is consistent with how Accountable.US components, including Restore Public Trust, have been

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<sup>1</sup> 82 Fed. Reg. 725

<sup>2</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

<sup>3</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/doj-expected-to-scale-back-roger-stones-extreme-sentencing-recommendation-official>

# ACCOUNTABLE<sup>US</sup>

treated by multiple agencies. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, for example, recognized this status in light of the regular publication and dissemination activities in which Accountable.US engages. Accountable.US will use the information gathered, and its analysis of it, to educate the public through reports, press releases, or other media. Accountable.US will also make materials it gathers, along with its analysis of those materials, available on its public website.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, relevant to both Accountable.US's fee waiver request and its alternative "media status" request, this document request is primarily and fundamentally for non-commercial purposes. On March 26, 2019, Accountable.US applied to be recognized as a not for profit, 501(c)(3) organization, with the Internal Revenue Service. Accordingly, Accountable.US does not have a commercial purpose and the release of the information requested is not in Accountable.US's financial interest. Accountable.US's mission is to ensure public officials are advancing policies in the public's interest rather than for special interests.

Accordingly, Accountable.US qualifies for a fee waiver or, alternatively, for fee limitations because of its "media status."

## **Request for Expedited Processing**

Pursuant to the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(1) and your agency's regulations,<sup>6</sup> Accountable.US requests expedited processing of this request. To that end, Accountable.US states the following:

I certify to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief that the information requested is urgently needed in order to inform the public about actual or alleged government activity.

I [further] certify to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief that there is widespread and exceptional media interest and there exist possible questions concerning the government's integrity, which affect public confidence.

## **Conclusion**

If you have any questions regarding this request, including how to construe the records sought or appropriate searches to locate them, please contact Accountable.US.

If my request is denied in whole or part, I ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions of the act. Additionally, if any documents are withheld based on the Agency's interpretation of any exemption, Accountable.US requests that you provide an index of those documents as required under *Vaughn v. Rosen*, 484 F.2d 820 (D.C. Cir. 1973), cert. denied, 415 U.S. 977 (1974). Specifically, this Vaughn index should describe withheld documents with enough specificity to determine whether the material is exempt under the act and must describe each document or portion withheld.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

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<sup>5</sup> Accountable.US and its components have demonstrated a commitment to public disclosure and public education through its website. For example, their websites contain multiple substantive analyses, document repositories, and other educational resources: [AlliedProgress.org/research](http://AlliedProgress.org/research); [AlliedProgress.org/campaigns](http://AlliedProgress.org/campaigns); [RestorePublicTrust.org/news](http://RestorePublicTrust.org/news); [RestorePublicTrust.org/BigPharmasBestFriends](http://RestorePublicTrust.org/BigPharmasBestFriends); [WesternValuesProject.org/DepartmentofInfluence](http://WesternValuesProject.org/DepartmentofInfluence)

<sup>6</sup> 82 Fed. Reg. 725

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