



AFL FOIA <foia@aflegal.org>

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**Status: FOIA-2021-01790**

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**Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP)** <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov>  
To: "foia@aflegal.org" <foia@aflegal.org>  
Cc: "michael.ding@aflegal.org" <michael.ding@aflegal.org>

Mon, Aug 8, 2022 at 8:12 PM

Michael Ding:

Good evening, please be advised the search remains ongoing for FOIA request FOIA-2021-01790. In my June 17, 2022 email, I estimated it would take five to six months to complete the search. At this time, my previous estimation remains on track with this search, and my estimation is the search should be completed in four months. Please keep in mind this is an estimation, should this change, you will be advised. Once the searching is completed, we will begin our review of potentially responsive records, and we will provide an updated estimated date of completion. In an effort to facilitate our ability to respond to this request, you may decide to narrow the parameters of the records search. Please note, the number of Department custodians subject to the records search and the broadness of the timeframe of the search are two significant factors in how long the records search takes to be completed. Please be advised, you are not required to limit custodians or narrow the timeframe, I am only providing you options that you could agree to, which might help facilitate our search. We will continue our records search accordingly unless you advise otherwise. Should you have additional questions or concerns regarding FOIA-2021-01790, you may contact this Office.

Thank you,

Valeree Villanueva

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**Valeree Villanueva**

Supervisory Government Information Specialist &

FOIA Public Liaison

Office of Information Policy

U.S. Department of Justice

Main: (202) 514-3642

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**From:** AFL FOIA <foia@aflegal.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 2, 2022 3:00 PM  
**To:** Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP) <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov>  
**Cc:** michael.ding@aflegal.org  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Status: FOIA-2021-01790

Good afternoon,

Would you please provide us with an updated estimate for completion of the search?

Thank you,  
Michael

On Fri, Jun 17, 2022 at 6:35 PM Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP) <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov> wrote:

Michael Ding,

Good evening, this response is associated with your organization's above-reference FOIA request. Please advise if there is a new contact for this request, so that this Office may update our tracking system. This request was acknowledged by letter sent on July 30, 2021, in which this Office advised the request is assigned to the complex track due to the need to search outside this Office. In my email sent on March 18, 2022, I advised this Office was continuing to search for records in the Offices of Legislative Affairs and Legal Policy; and I estimated eight to nine months to complete that search. At this time, we are still searching for records, and I estimate the search to be completed in five to six months. Should this estimation change, you will be advised of that change. Once the searching is completed, we will begin our review of potentially responsive records, and we will provide an updated estimated date of completion. In my email on March 18, 2022, I provided options regarding this search, should your organization decide to narrow the parameters of this request. Please be advised, these are only options to help facilitate the search and are not requirements. We will continue our records search accordingly unless you advise otherwise. Should you have additional questions or concerns, you may contact this Office.

Thank you,

Valeree Villanueva

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**Valeree Villanueva**

Supervisory Government Information Specialist &

FOIA Public Liaison

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202-514-3642

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**From:** AFL FOIA <foia@aflegal.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 10, 2022 2:06 PM  
**To:** Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP) <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov>  
**Cc:** Michael Ding <michael.ding@aflegal.org>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Status: FOIA-2021-01790

Hi Valeree,

Would you please provide us with an update on the status of this request.

Thank you!

Michael Ding

America First Legal Foundation

On Wed, Apr 27, 2022 at 10:36 AM AFL FOIA <foia@aflegal.org> wrote:

Valeree Villanueva,

What's the latest on this request?

Thank you,

America First Legal Foundation

On Fri, Mar 25, 2022 at 4:35 PM Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP) <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov> wrote:

Andrew Block:

Good afternoon, I am writing in response to your email below. I can confirm this Office is searching forty-two custodians of the Offices of Legislative Affairs and Legal Policy for your FOIA request FOIA-2021-01790. Please let me know if would like to further discuss or be provided additional information.

Thank you,

Valeree Villanueva

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**From:** AFL FOIA <foia@aflegal.org>

**Sent:** Monday, March 21, 2022 12:25 PM

**To:** Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP) <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov>

**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Status: FOIA-2021-01790

Valeree Villanueva,

Thank you for your response. We are open to discussing the option to narrow the search in order to move our request to a higher priority search queue.

To ensure we are on the same page, would you please confirm the currently contemplated "search of forty-two custodians of the Offices of Legislative Affairs and Legal Policy?" This would help ensure we are making a consideration to potentially remove officials or narrow the date range without any misunderstanding.

Thank you,

America First Legal Foundation

On Fri, Mar 18, 2022 at 4:47 PM Villanueva, Valeree A (OIP) <Valeree.A.Villanueva@usdoj.gov> wrote:

Andrew Block:

Good afternoon, your status inquiry email, sent on March 11, 2022 was forwarded to me for corresponding to you on the status of your FOIA request with this Office, FOIA-2021-01790.

Currently, we are continuing to search for records responsive to this request. More specifically, we are conducting a search for emails that are potentially responsive to this request. We conduct such email searches by utilizing an ediscovery search platform that allows for more dynamic processing of the records once they are located. That said, the queue for such ediscovery searches is extensive and can cause a delay in our ability to respond to you. Our search queues are prioritized based on the number of records custodians being searched, as that is a leading factor on how long the ediscovery search will take to be completed.

Your request currently requires a search of forty-two custodians of the Offices of Legislative Affairs and Legal Policy. Given our current ediscovery backlog, our records search is currently estimated to take eight to nine months to complete. Again, this is due to the number of ediscovery requests in our backlog as opposed to any specific issue with the nature of your request. Once the search is completed, we will begin our review of potentially responsive records, and then we can provide an estimated date of completion. Should you decided to further limit the number of records custodians, we would move your request to a higher priority search queue. For example, we could limit our records search to the emails of the leadership within the office or narrow the date range. Please be advised, you are not required to remove officials or narrow the date range, these are only options you could choose that might help facilitate our search.

Unless advised otherwise by you, we will continue our processing under the understanding that you are interested in responsive emails (to the extent such records exist) and will continue our records search accordingly. If you would like to further discuss your request, please feel free to contact our Office.

Thank you,

Valeree Villanueva

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**Valeree Villanueva**

Supervisory Government Information Specialist &

FOIA Public Liaison

Office of Information Policy

U.S. Department of Justice

202-514-3642

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**From:** DOJ.OIP.FOIA (SMO) <DOJ.OIP.FOIA@usdoj.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 11, 2022 12:13 PM  
**To:** OIP.Consult.Referrals <OIP.Consult.Referrals@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Status: FOIA-2021-01790

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**From:** AFL FOIA <foia@aflegal.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2022 1:50 PM  
**To:** DOJ.OIP.FOIA (SMO) <DOJ.OIP.FOIA@usdoj.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Status: FOIA-2021-01790

Good afternoon,

May we please request a status update on FOIA-2021-01790? Please find attached a copy of the OIP acknowledgement letter. This request does not appear in the FOIA STAR Portal.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter,

America First Legal Foundation