

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE
430 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Plaintiff

v.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Defendant.

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

The Democratic National Committee, plaintiff herein, alleges:

1. Following the seizure of archived ballots from Fulton County, Georgia—and seeking to ensure that the Trump Administration does not attempt unprecedented abuses of criminal law enforcement tools to undermine upcoming elections—the Democratic National Committee (DNC) sent requests for records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, to components of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) concerning any planned seizure of ballots, voting machines, and other voting system components.
2. Nearly five months later, the DNC has received no responsive documents, not even a list of documents withheld under statutory exemptions.
3. By withholding responsive documents past statutory deadlines, DOJ is violating FOIA.

4. To ensure that the American people obtain timely knowledge of potential threats to free and fair elections and to enable the DNC to take appropriate action to ensure voting rights are protected, the DNC now seeks this Court's aid to enforce FOIA requirements.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

5. This Court has original jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B) and 28 U.S.C. § 1331.

6. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. §§ 88 and 1391(e), as DOJ's headquarters is located in Washington, D.C., within this District, and a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the DNC's claim occurred here.

PARTIES

7. The Democratic National Committee (DNC) is the oldest continuing party committee in the United States and is the Democratic Party's national committee as defined by 52 U.S.C. § 30101(14). The DNC is dedicated to electing Democratic candidates in Federal, State, and local elections across the country. In support of its mission, the DNC seeks to educate registered Democratic Party members and supporters concerning the electoral process and potential impediments to voting, to encourage and assist Democratic Party members and supporters in casting ballots and having those ballots counted, and to preserve free and fair elections in the United States.

8. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is a federal agency within the meaning of FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552(f)(1), and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. Components of DOJ include the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Criminal Division (CRM). Upon information and belief, DOJ has possession, custody, and control of records to which the DNC seeks access.

ALLEGATIONS

The Risk of Ballot Seizure to the 2026 Midterm Elections

9. In early January 2026, President Trump told reporters that he regretted not having seized voting machines in December 2020, while the electoral count process was still ongoing. *See* Alan Feuer & Ashley Ahn, *Trump Regrets Not Seizing Voting Machines After 2020 Election*, N.Y. Times (Jan. 11, 2026).

10. Mere weeks later, the FBI raided the Fulton County Election Hub and Operation Center, seizing archived ballots and other records related to the 2020 presidential election for the ostensible purpose of obtaining evidence of criminal violations of the National Voter Registration Act, 52 U.S.C. § 20511, and the Civil Rights Act of 1960, 52 U.S.C. § 20701.

11. Following the Fulton County raid, a federal court found the warrant affidavit “defective in some respects,” “troubling,” and “far from perfect” but concluded that “seizure of materials from an election that occurred *five years ago*” did not infringe upon “interests in safeguarding election integrity.” *Pitts v. United States*, No. 1:26-cv-809, 2026 WL 1970785, *12–14 (N.D. Ga. May 6, 2026) (emphasis added).

12. Seizure of cast ballots or other voting system components *before* certification would threaten the security, transparency, and ultimate validity of an election. *See* Justin Levitt & John Keller, *Election-Related Search Warrants* 7–12 (Working Paper Aug. 1, 2026), https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=7227158.

13. Election officials around the country rigorously maintain chain of custody during the election process—including any time cast ballots are accessed or moved—to ensure that election results are trustworthy and verifiable. *See, e.g.*, The Elections Group, *Chain of Custody* (2024), <https://perma.cc/A7EA-N4NW>; U.S. Election Assistance Comm’n, *Best Practices: Chain*

of Custody (2021), <https://perma.cc/5NAV-DNYN>. Seizure of cast ballots or other voting system components would break the chain of custody, which could make it impossible for officials to certify the results of federal elections, as the Constitution requires. *See* U.S. Const. art. I, § 4, cl. 1; *see also, e.g., Waters v. Gnemi*, 907 So. 2d 307, 335 (Miss. 2005); *Qualkinbush v. Skubisz*, 826 N.E.2d 1181, 1204–04 (Ill. Ct. App. 2004).

14. Seizure of lawfully cast ballots prior to certification would violate voters’ First Amendment rights. *See, e.g., Libertarian Party v. D.C. Bd. of Elections & Ethics*, 768 F. Supp. 2d 174, 180 (D.D.C. 2011). Americans speak their political preferences by voting, and tabulation and certification are how that speech is conveyed to its audience. *See, e.g., Turner v. D.C. Bd. of Elections & Ethics*, 77 F. Supp. 2d 25, 31 (D.D.C. 1999); *see also Anderson v. Celebrezze*, 460 U.S. 780, 787–88 (1983); *United States v. Classic*, 313 U.S. 299, 315 (1941); *United States v. Mosley*, 238 U.S. 383, 386 (1915). Any mass seizure of cast ballots or other voting system components prior to tabulation and certification could prevent protected speech from reaching its audience, a quintessential prior restraint. *See, e.g., Roaden v. Kentucky*, 413 U.S. 496, 504 (1973); *New York Times Co. v. United States*, 403 U.S. 713, 714 (1971) (per curiam); *Marcus v. Search Warrants*, 367 U.S. 717, 738 (1961).

15. Seizure of records and papers requisite to voting in an election would also violate Title III of the Civil Rights Act, 52 U.S.C. §§ 20701–06, which requires officers of election to retain and preserve such materials and authorizes federal officials only to inspect, reproduce, or copy such materials at the election official’s office. *See also* 106 Cong. Rec. 6959 (Mar. 30, 1960) (noting deletion of a provision allowing the production of records at the local office of the United States Attorney); *United States v. Evans*, No. 1:25-cv-4403, 2026 WL 2267774, at *10 (D.D.C. Aug. 6, 2026) (addressing limitations on federal access to election records).

16. Last month, DOJ sent letters to officials in all 50 states and the District of Columbia warning that that could face criminal charges for allowing noncitizens to remain on their lists of eligible voters or facilitating noncitizens in receiving and casting ballots. Elsewhere, DOJ has argued that allowing registrants deemed ineligible by federal officials to cast ballots may lead to prosecution. These preemptive threats suggest that federal law enforcement may have already opened initial assessments, laying the groundwork for potential seizures of election materials prior to certification of the 2026 midterm election.

Removal of Justice Department Guardrails Against Ballot Seizure

17. Removal of longstanding guidance from the DOJ website, gutting of DOJ's Public Integrity Section, and extraordinary DOJ actions and omissions with respect to warrant applications and grand jury subpoenas afford these records time-sensitive importance.

18. DOJ has long published *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses*, a monograph setting out guidelines for these sensitive prosecutions. See U.S. Dep't of Justice, *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* (8th ed. 2017) (Richard C. Pilger, ed.). In recent months, DOJ removed *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* from its website and has not issued an updated edition or alternative guidance.

19. *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* explained that “[i]n most cases, election-related documents should not be taken from the custody of local election administrators until the election to which they pertain has been certified and the time for contesting the election results has expired.” *Id.* at 11. The only exception to this “non-inference policy” was where there was “evidence that local election administrators seek to retain or destroy the election records for a corrupt purpose or to further an ongoing election fraud scheme.” *Id.* at 11 n.3.

20. *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* further explained that even when “taking custody of election documents, election officials should not be deprived of documents necessary to tally and recount the ballots and to certify the election results.” *Id.* at 83. Once again, the only potential exception to this rule applied where “election officials are involved in an ongoing fraud or obstruction scheme.” *Id.* at 83 n.39.

21. The DOJ *Justice Manual* remains on the Department’s website and sets election noninterference policies, albeit in less detail. *See* U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Justice Manual* §§ 9-85.300 to .500, <https://www.justice.gov/jm/justice-manual> (“[T]he Department should not engage in overt criminal investigative measures in matters involving alleged ballot fraud until the election in question has been concluded, its results certified, and all recounts and election contests concluded.”). Yet the Justice Manual also recognizes that the Public Integrity Section may approve exceptions to these general policies. *See id.* § 9-85.300. Since January 2025, the Public Integrity Section has been gutted—reduced from roughly 40 attorneys to only two—raising questions about the continued role of career prosecutors in such sensitive decisions.

22. In recent months, DOJ has also taken aggressive positions with respect to warrant applications and grand jury subpoenas, including deviating from a formal DOJ regulation. *See, e.g.,* Let. from Hon. Patrick J. Schlitz, *In re: United States of America*, No. 26-1135 (8th Cir. Jan. 23, 2026) (“frivolous” claim of “a national-security emergency” as basis to demand a district judge immediately sign a warrant application rejected by a magistrate judge); Charlie Savage, *U.S. Failed to Alert Judge to Press Law in Application to Search Reporter’s Home*, N.Y. Times (Feb. 2, 2026) (failure to notify a magistrate judge of applicable statutory protections); Michael M. Grynbaum & Jonah E. Bromwich, *U.S. Withdraws Subpoenas Issued to New York Times Journalists*, N.Y. Times (July 23, 2026) (subpoena issued contrary to 28 C.F.R. § 50.10).

Democratic National Committee Voter Protection and Election Litigation

23. The DNC runs voter protection and litigation programs to ensure that eligible voters can cast ballots that will be counted.

24. The DNC maintains IWillVote.com, VoyaVotar.com, and SMS-based resources to help voters register to vote, verify voter status, update voter information, learn about polling places and ID requirements, and find important dates and deadlines for voting.

25. The DNC's voter protection hotline—1-833-DEM-VOTE—is monitored by DNC employees and volunteers to address complex voter concerns.

26. Gathering accurate information concerning the planned actions of federal, state, and local officials is critical to DNC's voter protection efforts.

27. The DNC also routinely litigates election law disputes to protect free and fair elections, including ensuring that ballots cast by eligible citizens are counted and that lawfully conducted elections are certified by local and state officials. *See, e.g., Adams v. Fulton Cnty.*, 918 S.E.2d 402, 403 n.2 (Ga. Ct. App. 2025).

28. In the past year, DNC litigation efforts have included challenges to executive branch usurpation of authority to establish the time, place, and manner of conducting elections for federal office—authority that the Constitution reserves to Congress and the States—and litigation under FOIA concerning potential deployment of federal troops or armed agents to the polls, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 592.

29. Gathering accurate information concerning the planned actions of federal, state, and local officials is critical to DNC's litigation efforts.

30. In February 2026, the DNC sent two requests for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, to Department of Justice components concerning any potential seizure of election materials prior to the certification of an election.

31. FOIA requires agencies to provide a substantive response to FOIA requests “within 20 days”—excluding weekends and holidays—which may be extended for no more than “ten working days.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i)(I), (B)(i).

32. FOIA also requires agencies to respond to any administrative appeal “within twenty days”—excluding weekends and holidays—which once again may be extended for no more than “ten working days.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(ii), (B)(i). This deadline otherwise “shall not be tolled” unless the agency makes a one-time request for additional information or seeks clarification regarding fees. 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(ii)(I)–(II).

33. Although more than five months have now passed, the DNC has yet to receive a substantive response to the FOIA requests at issue.

Department of Justice: Federal Bureau of Investigation

34. On February 6, 2026, the DNC sent a FOIA request to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) via the FBI Electronic Freedom of Information / Privacy Act (EFOIPA) Platform and first-class mail seeking records related to “planned, anticipated, or potential inspection or seizure of election materials—with or without a warrant—to be conducted in the period beginning 30 days before a federal primary or general election and the certification of such election by appropriate state election officials.”

35. The request specified that “election materials” included “ballots, voting machines, and other voting system components, as defined by Section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 21081(b).”

36. The request sought records including communications, factual material, formal or informal directives, policy documents, or records addressing final agency decisions or actions.

37. A true and correct copy of this request is attached as Exhibit 1.

38. On February 18, 2026, the FBI sent a letter acknowledging receipt of this request, assigning reference number 1719295-000, and summarizing the subject as “Seizure of Election Materials (On or After January 20, 2025).”

39. On March 27, 2026, the FBI sent a form letter stating that the request was being administratively closed because it “is too vague as it does not comply with the requirements of 28 CFR § 16.3(b).” The letter continued, “Your request lacks specificity; and therefore, the FBI cannot reasonably locate records with a ‘reasonable amount of effort.’” The letter also provided “[e]xamples of specific information which could assist in locating potentially responsive records” related to “Individuals” and “Organizations or Events” but not related to FBI policies, guidelines, or communications. A true and correct copy of this response is attached as Exhibit 2.

40. On March 31, 2026, the DNC contacted the FBI’s public liaison to ask whether the DNC might work with the FBI to address its specificity concerns. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(i)(III)(bb) (affording FOIA requestors a right to “seek dispute resolution services from the FOIA Public Liaison of the agency” following an adverse determination). The FBI refused to engage in a cooperative process and advised that an administrative appeal was the only path forward.

41. On April 21, 2026, the DNC filed an administrative appeal of the FBI’s decision to administratively close the FOIA request. The appeal explained that the DNC’s request both spelled out a limited universe of responsive documents and offered further clarity through discussion in the fee waiver request. Moreover, the appeal explained that the FBI failed to comply with 28

C.F.R. § 16.3(b), which requires any determination that a FOIA request lacks specificity “to inform the requester what additional information is needed or why the request is otherwise insufficient.”

A true and correct copy of this appeal is attached as Exhibit 3.

42. That same day, the DOJ Office of Information Policy (OIP) returned a confirmation letter assigning number A-2026-01211 to the appeal.

43. The DNC has not received any further communications from the FBI or OIP regarding this request.

44. To date, the FBI has not provided the records requested by the DNC, notwithstanding FOIA’s statutory deadlines.

45. Through OIP’s failure to respond within the time limits required by law, the DNC has constructively exhausted administrative remedies with respect to this FOIA request.

46. The FBI has wrongfully withheld the requested records from the DNC.

Department of Justice: Criminal Division

47. On February 6, 2026, the DNC sent a FOIA request to the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice (CRM) via email and first-class mail seeking records related to “planned, anticipated, or potential inspection or seizure of election materials—with or without a warrant—to be conducted in the period beginning 30 days before a federal primary or general election and the certification of such election by appropriate state election officials.”

48. The request specified that “election materials” included “ballots, voting machines, and other voting system components, as defined by Section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 21081(b).”

49. The request sought records including communications, factual material, formal or informal directives, policy documents, or records addressing final agency decisions or actions.

50. A true and correct copy of this request is attached as Exhibit 4.

51. On February 12, 2026, CRM sent a letter acknowledging receipt of this request, assigning reference number CRM-302409760, and summarizing the subject as “Inspection or Seizure of Election Materials.”

52. CRM also concluded that other components of DOJ could also maintain the requested records and routed the request to the Civil Rights Division (CRT) and OIP for processing and a direct response back to the DNC.

53. On February 24, CRT sent a letter acknowledging receipt of the request and assigning reference number 26-00267-F.

54. The DNC has not received any further communications from CRM, CRT, or OIP regarding this request.

55. To date, CRM, CRT, and OIP have not provided the records requested by the DNC, notwithstanding FOIA’s statutory deadlines.

56. Through CRM, CRT, and OIP’s failure to respond within the time limits required by law, the DNC has constructively exhausted administrative remedies with respect to this FOIA request.

57. CRM, CRT, and OIP have wrongfully withheld the requested records from the DNC.

CLAIM FOR RELIEF

Count I: Freedom of Information Act, 52 U.S.C. § 552

58. The DNC realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations set forth above.

59. By failing to respond to the DNC’s requests with determinations and prompt productions of responsive records within the statutorily mandated time period, DOJ has violated its duties under 5 U.S.C. § 552, including but not limited to, its duties to conduct a reasonable

search for responsive records, to take reasonable steps to release all nonexempt information, and to not withhold non-exempt portions of responsive records

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Democratic National Committee requests that this Court:

- A. Order DOJ to conduct searches for any and all responsive records to the DNC's FOIA requests using search methods reasonably calculated to lead to discovery of all responsive records;
- B. Order DOJ to produce, by a date certain, any and all non-exempt responsive records and a *Vaughn* index of any responsive records withheld under a claim of exemption;
- C. Enjoin DOJ from continuing to withhold any and all non-exempt responsive records;
- D. Award the DNC its costs, attorneys' fees, and other disbursements for this action; and
- E. Grant any other relief this Court deems appropriate.

Dated: August 20, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin B. Klubes
(Bar No. 428852)
Adam Miller
(Bar No. 496339)
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/s/ Daniel J. Freeman
Daniel J. Freeman
(Bar No. 90038422)
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 863-8000
freemand@dnc.org

Exhibit 1

**FBI FOIA Request
February 6, 2026**



February 6, 2026

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Attn: Initial Processing Operations Unit
Record/Information Dissemination Section
200 Constitution Drive
Winchester, VA 22602

VIA EFOIPA AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Dear Sir or Madame:

The Democratic National Committee (DNC) submits this request for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and Department of Justice (DOJ) procedures for disclosure of records under FOIA, 28 C.F.R. § 16.1-.11.

The DNC requests the following records from January 20, 2025, to the date this request is processed.

All Records relating to the planned, anticipated, or potential inspection or seizure of election materials—with or without a warrant—to be conducted in the period beginning 30 days before a federal primary or general election and the certification of such election by appropriate state election officials, including but not limited to ballots, voting machines, and other voting system components, as defined by Section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 21081(b).

This request includes—but is not limited to—records containing or relating to:

1. Communications within, among, or between the U.S. Department of Justice, any DOJ component, and/or the Executive Office of the President;
2. Purely factual material;
3. Formal or informal directives or orders from the Executive Office of the President, the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, the Office of the Associate Attorney General, the Office of the Executive Secretariat, component leadership, or any other political appointee;
4. Policy documents, and
5. Final agency decisions or actions.

The above request excludes agency records consisting solely of news articles or press clippings, so long as the records include no accompanying discussion by agency officials.

If it is your position any portion of the requested records is exempt from disclosure, the DNC 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).

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A) and agency regulations, the DNC requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. The subject of this request concerns the operations of the federal government, the preservations of individual voting rights, and potential violations of 18 U.S.C. § 592, and the disclosures likely will contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the DNC 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., *Judicial Watch v. Rossotti*, 326 F.3d 1309, 1312-13 (D.C. Cir. 2003); *McClellan Ecological v. Carlucci*, 835 F.2d 1282, 1285 (9th Cir. 1987); see also 28 C.F.R. § 16.10(b)(1), (k).

The Justice Manual explains that “The Department has long recognized that the States – not the federal government – are responsible for administering elections, determining the validity of votes, and tabulating the results, with challenges handled by the appropriate election administrators, officials, legislatures, and courts. The Department has a limited role in these processes and should generally avoid interfering or appearing to interfere with election administration, tabulation, validation, or certification.” Justice Manual § 9-85.300; see also U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* 8 (8th ed. 2017) (Richard C. Pilger, ed.) (“It is the states that have primary authority to ensure that only qualified individuals register and vote, that the polling process is conducted fairly, and that the candidate who received the most valid votes is certified as the winner.”). The Justice Manual further prescribes that “the Department should not engage in overt criminal investigative measures in matters involving alleged ballot fraud until the election in question has been concluded, its results certified, and all recounts and election contests concluded.” Justice Manual § 9-85.300. Longstanding guidance thus dictates that “[i]n most cases, election-related documents should not be taken from the custody of local election administrators until the election to which they pertain has been certified and the time for contesting the election results has expired.” *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* at 11. The only exception to this “non-inference policy” is instances where there is “evidence that local election administrators seek to retain or destroy the election records for a corrupt purpose or to further an ongoing election fraud scheme.” *Id.* at 11 n.3. In any case, Department guidance dictates that when “taking custody of election documents, election officials should not be deprived of documents necessary to tally and recount the ballots and to certify the election results.” *Id.* at 83. Once again, the only potential exception to this rule may apply “if the facts indicate that the election officials are involved in an ongoing fraud or obstruction scheme.” *Id.* at 83 n.39.

Recent actions and statements by Administration officials have drawn substantial public concern that these policies are no longer in force or that exceptions have been or will be expanded to effectively void the policies. On January 28, 2026, the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted a raid at the Fulton County Election Hub and Operation Center. Pursuant to a search warrant, the Bureau seized ballots and other record related to the 2020 Presidential Election. The warrant application, claimed that the purpose of the raid was to obtain “evidence of the commission of a criminal offense and the property which has been used as the means of committing a criminal offense, concerning violations of Title 52, United States Code, Sections 20701 and 20511.” However, the statute of limitations has run for the commission of any such crime in November of 2020. More pressingly, the President has called for a federal “takeover” of elections. *See, e.g.,* Reid J. Epstein & Nick Corasaniti, *Trump, in an Escalation, Calls for Republicans to “Nationalize” Elections*, N.Y. Times (Feb 2., 2026). In concert with the President’s expressed regret for not having seized voting machines in November 2020, *see* Alan Feuer & Ashley Ahn, *Trump Regrets Not Seizing Voting Machines After 2020 Election* (Jan. 11, 2026), this has raised serious public concerns over the conduct of upcoming federal elections.

The DNC is the oldest continuing party committee in the United States and is the Democratic Party’s national committee. *See* 52 U.S.C. § 30101(14). As a 527 political organization, the DNC is a non-profit entity. *See* 26 U.S.C. § 527(e)(1). The DNC is organized to nominate and assist in the election of Democratic candidates, including through the education of its voters. The DNC utilizes research, communications, and voter mobilization functions to advance its mission. The DNC intends to analyze the information responsive to this request and to share its analysis with the public through press releases and other means. The release of information obtained through this request is not in the DNC’s financial interest.

Under these circumstances, the DNC 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 (202) 923-6429 or freemand@dnc.org. Also, if the DNC’s request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact me immediately upon making such a determination.

Where possible, please produce records in electronic format. Please send the requested records to me at either freemand@dnc.org or Daniel Freeman, Democratic National Committee, 430 South Capitol Street SE #3, Washington, DC 20003. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Freeman

Daniel J. Freeman
Litigation Director
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE #3
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 923-6429
freemand@dnc.org

Exhibit 2

**FBI FOIA Denial
March 27, 2026**

**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

Washington, D.C. 20535

March 27, 2026

DANIEL FREEMAN
DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE
NUMBER 3
430 SOUTH CAPITOL STREET SE
WASHINGTON, DC 20003

FOIPA Request No.: 1719295-000
Subject: Seizure of Election Materials
(On or After January 20, 2025)

Dear Daniel Freeman:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts (FOIPA) request. Below you will find informational paragraphs relevant to your request. Please read each item carefully.

The FOIPA requires agencies to provide access to reasonably described, nonexempt records [Title 5, United States Code, Section 552(a)(3)(A)]. The information requested in the referenced letter is not considered a FOIPA request because it does not comply with the FOIPA and its regulations. Therefore, your request is being administratively closed for one or more of the following reasons:

- ☐ The FOIPA does not require federal agencies to answer inquiries, create records, conduct research, or draw conclusions concerning queried data.
- ☒ Your request is too vague as it does not comply with the requirements of 28 CFR § 16.3(b). Your request lacks specificity; and therefore, the FBI cannot reasonably locate records with a "reasonable amount of effort."
- ☐ Your request is overly broad as it contains an overly long, indefinite, no date range or specific identifiers, and/or uses unexplained or unidentified terms and acronyms. Your request does not provide sufficient details to enable FBI personnel to locate potentially responsive records with a "reasonable amount of effort;" and therefore, we were unable to conduct a search of the Central Records System as your request does not comply with the requirements of 28 CFR § 16.3(b).
- ☐ Your request seeks information that does not fall under the purview of the FOIPA. The information requested in the referenced letter is not considered a FOIPA request because it does not comply with the requirements of 28 CFR § 16.3(b).

Examples of specific information which could assist in locating potentially responsive records within a reasonable amount of effort are as follows:

- Individuals
 - Complete name
 - Birth date
 - Place of birth
 - Place of death
 - Date of death
 - Date and location of incident
- Organizations or Events
 - Date of event
 - Time frame
 - Location

For questions on how to reasonably describe your request, please email us at foipaquestions@fbi.gov. Please reference the FOIPA Request number listed above in all correspondence concerning your request. Additional information about the FOIPA can be found at www.fbi.gov/foia.

If you are not satisfied with the FBI's determination in response to this request, you may proceed under any or all of the following options:

- You may seek dispute resolution services through the FBI directly by emailing our FOIA Public Liaison at foipaquestions@fbi.gov. The subject heading should clearly state "Dispute Resolution Services." Please also cite the FOIPA Request Number assigned to your request so it may be easily identified.
- You may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), who serves as the federal FOIA Ombudsman. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.
- You may file an administrative appeal by writing to the Director, Office of Information Policy (OIP), United States Department of Justice, 441 G Street, NW, 6th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20530, or you may submit an appeal through OIP's FOIA STAR portal by creating an account following the instructions on OIP's website: <https://www.justice.gov/oip/submit-and-track-request-or-appeal>. **Pursuant to 28 C.F.R. § 16.8(a), your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within ninety (90) days of the date of this response to your request.** If you submit your appeal by mail, both the letter and the envelope should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." Please reference the FOIPA Request Number listed above in your correspondence so it may be easily identified. If possible, please provide a copy of your original request and this response letter with your appeal.

Note: Utilizing the FBI's dispute resolution services or requesting mediation through OGIS does not toll the ninety (90) day limit to file a timely appeal with OIP.

Sincerely,



Amie M. Napier
Section Chief
Record/Information Dissemination Section
Information Management Division

Exhibit 3

**FBI FOIA Appeal
April 21, 2026**



April 21, 2026

Sean Glendening
Office of Information Policy (OIP)
United States Department of Justice
441 G Street NW
6th Floor
Washington, DC 20530

VIA FOIA STAR AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Re: FOIA Appeal, FOIPA Request No. 1719295-000

Dear Mr. Glendening,

This letter constitutes an administrative appeal under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552. This appeal concerns the Federal Bureau of Information's (FBI) determination that FOIA Request No. 1719295-000, attached hereto, "lacks specificity" and "is too vague." For the reasons that follow, this determination is erroneous, and the records requested must be released.

I. Factual and Procedural History

On February 6, 2026, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) submitted a FOIA request to the FBI via eFOIPA and First-Class Mail. The Request sought

All Records relating to the planned, anticipated, or potential inspection or seizure of election materials—with or without a warrant—to be conducted in the period beginning 30 days before a federal primary or general election and the certification of such election by appropriate state election officials, including but not limited to ballots, voting machines, and other voting system components, as defined by Section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 21081(b).

In an effort to assist FOIA officers, the request expressly included the following categories of records:

1. Communications within, among, or between the U.S. Department of Justice, any DOJ component, and/or the Executive Office of the President;
2. Purely factual material;
3. Formal or informal directives or orders from the Executive Office of the President, the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, the Office of the Associate Attorney General, the Office of the Executive Secretariat, component leadership, or any other political appointee;
4. Policy documents, and
5. Final agency decisions or actions.

The Request also excluded agency records consisting solely of news articles or press clippings, so long as the records included no accompanying discussion by agency officials. The request followed in the wake of the FBI's seizure of November 2020 ballots and related materials from Fulton County, Georgia, as well as reporting that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence had seized voting machines and election data in Puerto Rico. *See, e.g.,* Devlin Barrett, et al., *Move to Seize Ballots Thrusts F.B.I. into Trump's Election Conspiracy Claim*, N.Y. Times, Jan. 28, 2026; Phil Stewart et al., *Exclusive: US Spy Chief's Office Investigated Voting Machines in Puerto Rico*, Reuters, Feb. 4, 2026.

eFOIPA returned a confirmation email on February 6, 2026, and the FBI sent a letter acknowledging receipt on February 18. On March 27, 2026, the FBI sent a second responsive letter, this time asserting that the Request "is not considered a FOIPA request because it does not comply with the FOIPA and its regulations." The letter specified, "Your request is too vague as it does not comply with the requirements of 28 CFR § 16.3(b). Your request lacks specificity; and therefore, the FBI cannot reasonably locate records with a 'reasonable amount of effort.'" As a result, the letter indicated that the Request "is being administratively closed."

On March 31, the DNC wrote to the FBI via foipaquestions@fbi.gov, disagreeing with this determination and inquiring whether the DNC might work with the Bureau to address its concerns. Ultimately, the FBI clarified that it was not amenable to a cooperative process and that resolution was available only through an administrative appeal.

II. Argument

The Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, was enacted to "ensure an informed citizenry, vital to the functioning of a democratic society, needed to check against corruption and to hold the governors accountable to the governed." *NLRB v. Robbins Tire & Rubber Co.*, 437 U.S. 214, 242 (1978). The general philosophy of the Act is "full agency disclosure unless information is exempted under clearly delineated statutory language." *Fed. Open Mkt. Comm. of Fed. Rsrv. Sys. v. Merrill*, 443 U.S. 340, 351–52 (1979).

The DNC's request for records relating to the planned, anticipated, or potential inspection or seizure of electronic materials within a delineated time period "reasonably describes" the records sought, as required by 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(3)(A). Not only did the request spell out a limited universe of relevant documents, but discussion under the fee waiver provision explained the rationale for the request, providing further clarity. For instance, the Justice Manual and the monograph *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* (i.e., the Pilger Memo) set out a range of substantive and procedural guardrails against FBI interference with ongoing elections. To the extent that new policies and procedures contradict those longstanding limitations—or directives exist to act notwithstanding those limitations—such documents would be responsive to the plain language of the Request.

In addition, Department regulations establish that, "if after receiving a request a component determined that it does not reasonably describe the records sought, the component shall inform the requester what additional information is needed or why the request is otherwise insufficient." 28

CFR § 16.3(b). The FBI did not do so. The form denial letter did not offer specific guidance concerning the “additional information” needed to clarify the request. Rather, the denial provided examples of information that would be relevant to a particular individual, organization, or event. Beyond a conclusory assertion that the request lacks specificity, the form denial letter did not offer any explanation for why the request is insufficient.

Ultimately, a description of the requested documents is “sufficient if it enable[s] a professional employee of the agency who [i]s familiar with the subject area of the request to locate the record with a reasonable amount of effort.” *Truitt v. Dep’t of State*, 897 F.2d 540, 545 n.36 (D.C. Cir. 1990) (quoting H.R. Rep. No. 93-876, 93d Cong., 2d Sess. 5–6 (1974)). The words of the Request are not vague; they allow agency staff to “determine precisely what records are being requested.” *Yeager v. DEA*, 678 F.2d 315, 326 (D.C. Cir. 1982) (cleaned up). Nor would a search be unreasonably burdensome. *See Goland v. CIA*, 607 F.2d 339, 353 (D.C. Cir. 1978). Indeed, to press such an argument, the FBI would need to attempt an electronic search and estimate the time and expense of reviewing responsive records. *See, e.g., Pub. Employees for Envtl. Responsibility v. U.S. EPA*, 314 F. Supp. 3d 68, 80–81 (D.D.C. 2018); *cf. In re Non-Party Subpoena*, 659 F. Supp. 3d 54, 58–59 (D.D.C. 2023) (analogous subpoena standard). No such attempt appears to have been made.

Conclusion

By denying the DNC’s FOIA request on purported vagueness grounds, the FBI has violated its obligations under FOIA. Moreover, the FBI’s failure to inform the DNC of additional information needed or why the request is otherwise insufficient is a violation of 28 C.F.R. § 16.3(b), the very regulation cited to justify denial of the Request. The DNC respectfully requests that OIP remand this matter back to the FBI with instructions to conduct a reasonable search, provide responsive records not otherwise exempt, and produce an index of exempted records withheld.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. Freeman
 Litigation Director
 Democratic National Committee
 430 South Capitol Street SE
 Washington, DC 20003
 (202) 863-8000
 freemand@dnc.org

Exhibit 4

**CRM FOIA Request
February 6, 2026**



February 6, 2026

Christina Butler
Chief, FOIA/PA Branch
Criminal Division
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20530
crm.foia@usdoj.gov

VIA EMAIL AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Dear Ms. Butler:

The Democratic National Committee (DNC) submits this request for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and Department of Justice (DOJ) procedures for disclosure of records under FOIA, 28 C.F.R. § 16.1-11.

The DNC requests the following records from January 20, 2025, to the date this request is processed.

All Records relating to the planned, anticipated, or potential inspection or seizure of election materials—with or without a warrant—to be conducted in the period beginning 30 days before a federal primary or general election and the certification of such election by appropriate state election officials, including but not limited to ballots, voting machines, and other voting system components, as defined by Section 301(b) of the Help America Vote Act, 52 U.S.C. § 21081(b).

This request includes—but is not limited to—records containing or relating to:

1. Communications within, among, or between the U.S. Department of Justice, any DOJ component, and/or the Executive Office of the President;
2. Purely factual material;
3. Formal or informal directives or orders from the Executive Office of the President, the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, the Office of the Associate Attorney General, the Office of the Executive Secretariat, component leadership, or any other political appointee;
4. Policy documents, and
5. Final agency decisions or actions.

The above request excludes agency records consisting solely of news articles or press clippings, so long as the records include no accompanying discussion by agency officials.

If it is your position any portion of the requested records is exempt from disclosure, the DNC 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).

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A) and agency regulations, the DNC requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. The subject of this request concerns the operations of the federal government, the preservations of individual voting rights, and potential violations of 18 U.S.C. § 592, and the disclosures likely will contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the DNC 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., *Judicial Watch v. Rossotti*, 326 F.3d 1309, 1312-13 (D.C. Cir. 2003); *McClellan Ecological v. Carlucci*, 835 F.2d 1282, 1285 (9th Cir. 1987); see also 28 C.F.R. § 16.10(b)(1), (k).

The Justice Manual explains that “The Department has long recognized that the States – not the federal government – are responsible for administering elections, determining the validity of votes, and tabulating the results, with challenges handled by the appropriate election administrators, officials, legislatures, and courts. The Department has a limited role in these processes and should generally avoid interfering or appearing to interfere with election administration, tabulation, validation, or certification.” Justice Manual § 9-85.300; see also U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* 8 (8th ed. 2017) (Richard C. Pilger, ed.) (“It is the states that have primary authority to ensure that only qualified individuals register and vote, that the polling process is conducted fairly, and that the candidate who received the most valid votes is certified as the winner.”). The Justice Manual further prescribes that “the Department should not engage in overt criminal investigative measures in matters involving alleged ballot fraud until the election in question has been concluded, its results certified, and all recounts and election contests concluded.” Justice Manual § 9-85.300. Longstanding guidance thus dictates that “[i]n most cases, election-related documents should not be taken from the custody of local election administrators until the election to which they pertain has been certified and the time for contesting the election results has expired.” *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses* at 11. The only exception to this “non-inference policy” is instances where there is “evidence that local election administrators seek to retain or destroy the election records for a corrupt purpose or to further an ongoing election fraud scheme.” *Id.* at 11 n.3. In any case, Department guidance dictates that when “taking custody of election documents, election officials should not be deprived of documents necessary to tally and recount the ballots and to certify the

election results.” *Id.* at 83. Once again, the only potential exception to this rule may apply “if the facts indicate that the election officials are involved in an ongoing fraud or obstruction scheme.” *Id.* at 83 n.39.

Recent actions and statements by Administration officials have drawn substantial public concern that these policies are no longer in force or that exceptions have been or will be expanded to effectively void the policies. On January 28, 2026, the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted a raid at the Fulton County Election Hub and Operation Center. Pursuant to a search warrant, the Bureau seized ballots and other record related to the 2020 Presidential Election. The warrant application, claimed that the purpose of the raid was to obtain “evidence of the commission of a criminal offense and the property which has been used as the means of committing a criminal office, concerning violations of Title 52, United States Code, Sections 20701 and 20511.” However, the statute of limitations has run for the commission of any such crime in November of 2020. More pressingly, the President has called for a federal “takeover” of elections. *See, e.g.,* Reid J. Epstein & Nick Corasaniti, *Trump, in an Escalation, Calls for Republicans to “Nationalize” Elections*, N.Y. Times (Feb 2., 2026). In concert with the President’s expressed regret for not having seized voting machines in November 2020, *see* Alan Feuer & Ashley Ahn, *Trump Regrets Not Seizing Voting Machines After 2020 Election* (Jan. 11, 2026), this has raised serious public concerns over the conduct of upcoming federal elections.

The DNC is the oldest continuing party committee in the United States and is the Democratic Party’s national committee. *See* 52 U.S.C. § 30101(14). As a 527 political organization, the DNC is a non-profit entity. *See* 26 U.S.C. § 527(e)(1). The DNC is organized to nominate and assist in the election of Democratic candidates, including through the education of its voters. The DNC utilizes research, communications, and voter mobilization functions to advance its mission. The DNC intends to analyze the information responsive to this request and to share its analysis with the public through press releases and other means. The release of information obtained through this request is not in the DNC’s financial interest.

Under these circumstances, the DNC 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 (202) 923-6429 or freemand@dnc.org. Also, if the DNC’s request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact me immediately upon making such a determination.

Where possible, please produce records in electronic format. Please send the requested records to me at either freemand@dnc.org or Daniel Freeman, Democratic National Committee, 430 South Capitol Street SE #3, Washington, DC 20003. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Freeman

Daniel J. Freeman
Litigation Director
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE #3
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 923-6429
freemand@dnc.org

CIVIL COVER SHEET

JS-44 (Rev. 8/2026 DC)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS (b) COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED PLAINTIFF (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)	DEFENDANTS COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED DEFENDANT (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED
(c) ATTORNEYS (FIRM NAME, ADDRESS, AND TELEPHONE NUMBER)	ATTORNEYS (IF KNOWN)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (PLACE AN x IN ONE BOX ONLY) ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff ☐ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party) ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant ☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in item III)	III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (PLACE AN x IN ONE BOX FOR PLAINTIFF AND ONE BOX FOR DEFENDANT) FOR DIVERSITY CASES ONLY! <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 40%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">PTF</th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DFT</th> <th style="width: 30%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">PTF</th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">DFT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Citizen of this State</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 1</td> <td>Incorporated or Principal Place of Business in This State</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Citizen of Another State</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 2</td> <td>Incorporated and Principal Place of Business in Another State</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 3</td> <td>Foreign Nation</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">☐ 6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		PTF	DFT		PTF	DFT	Citizen of this State	☐ 1	☐ 1	Incorporated or Principal Place of Business in This State	☐ 4	☐ 4	Citizen of Another State	☐ 2	☐ 2	Incorporated and Principal Place of Business in Another State	☐ 5	☐ 5	Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	☐ 3	☐ 3	Foreign Nation	☐ 6	☐ 6
	PTF	DFT		PTF	DFT																				
Citizen of this State	☐ 1	☐ 1	Incorporated or Principal Place of Business in This State	☐ 4	☐ 4																				
Citizen of Another State	☐ 2	☐ 2	Incorporated and Principal Place of Business in Another State	☐ 5	☐ 5																				
Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	☐ 3	☐ 3	Foreign Nation	☐ 6	☐ 6																				

IV. CASE ASSIGNMENT AND NATURE OF SUIT

(Place an X in one Nature of Suit that best represents your Cause of Action. For Nature of Suit descriptions see [here](#).)

A. Antitrust 410 Antitrust	B. Personal Injury/Malpractice 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel & Slander 330 Federal Employers Liability 340 Marine 345 Marine Product Liability 350 Motor Vehicle 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability 360 Other Personal Injury 362 Medical Malpractice 365 Product Liability 367 Health Care/Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability 368 Asbestos Product Liability	C. Administrative Agency Review 151 Medicare Act <u>Social Security</u> 861 HIA (1395ff) 862 Black Lung (923) 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) 864 SSID Title XVI 865 RSI (405(g)) <u>Other Statutes</u> 891 Agricultural Acts 893 Environmental Matters 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision	D. Temporary Restraining Order/Preliminary Injunction This category must be selected if the action is accompanied by a Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and/or Preliminary Injunction. **A corresponding nature of suit from any other category must also be selected for this category of case assignment.** (If Antitrust, then A governs)		
E. General Civil (Other)		OR		F. Pro Se General Civil	
<u>Real Property</u> 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 230 Rent, Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property <u>Personal Property</u> 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<u>Bankruptcy</u> 422 Appeal 27 USC 158 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 <u>Prisoner Petitions</u> 535 Death Penalty 540 Mandamus & Other 550 Civil Rights 555 Prison Conditions 560 Civil Detainee – Conditions of Confinement <u>Property Rights</u> 820 Copyrights 830 Patent 835 Patent – Abbreviated New Drug Application 840 Trademark 880 Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016 (DTSA)	<u>Federal Tax Suits</u> 870 Taxes (US plaintiff or defendant) 871 IRS-Third Party 26 USC 7609 <u>Forfeiture/Penalty</u> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 690 Other <u>Other Statutes</u> 375 False Claims Act 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) 400 State Reapportionment 430 Banks & Banking 450 Commerce/ICC Rates/etc. 460 Deportation	462 Naturalization Application 465 Other Immigration Actions 470 Racketeer Influenced & Corrupt Organization 480 Consumer Credit 485 Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) 490 Cable/Satellite TV 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange 896 Arbitration 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes 890 Other Statutory Actions (if not Privacy Act)		

G. Habeas Corpus/2255 530 Habeas Corpus – General 510 Motion/Vacate Sentence 463 Habeas Corpus – Alien Detainee	H. Employment Discrimination 442 Civil Rights – Employment (criteria: race, gender/sex, national origin, discrimination, disability, age, religion, retaliation) *(If pro se, select this deck)*	I. FOIA/Privacy Act 895 Freedom of Information Act 890 Other Statutory Actions (if Privacy Act) *(If pro se, select this deck)*	J. Student Loan 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loan (excluding veterans)
K. Labor/ERISA (non-employment) 710 Fair Labor Standards Act 720 Labor/Mgmt. Relations 740 Labor Railway Act 751 Family and Medical Leave Act 790 Other Labor Litigation 791 Empl. Ret. Inc. Security Act	L. Other Civil Rights (non-employment) 441 Voting (if not Voting Rights Act) 443 Housing/Accommodations 440 Other Civil Rights 445 Americans w/Disabilities – Employment 446 Americans w/Disabilities – Other 448 Education	M. Contract 110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholder's Suits 190 Other Contracts 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise	N. Three-Judge Court 441 Civil Rights – Voting (if Voting Rights Act)

V. ORIGIN
☐ 1 Original Proceeding
 ☐ 2 Removed from State Court
 ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
 ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened
 ☐ 5 Transferred from another district (specify)
 ☐ 6 Multi-district Litigation
 ☐ 7 Appeal to District Judge from Mag. Judge
 ☐ 8 Multi-district Litigation – Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION (CITE THE U.S. CIVIL STATUTE UNDER WHICH YOU ARE FILING AND WRITE A BRIEF STATEMENT OF CAUSE.)

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT	CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.C.P. 23 ☐	DEMAND \$	Check YES only if demanded in complaint JURY DEMAND: YES NO
VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY	(See instruction)	YES NO	If yes, please complete related case form

DATE: _____	SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD _____
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET JS-44
 Authority for Civil Cover Sheet

The JS-44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and services of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. Listed below are tips for completing the civil cover sheet. These tips coincide with the Roman Numerals on the cover sheet.

- I.** COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED PLAINTIFF/DEFENDANT (b) County of residence: Use 11001 to indicate plaintiff if resident of Washington, DC, 88888 if plaintiff is resident of United States but not Washington, DC, and 99999 if plaintiff is outside the United States.
- III.** CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES: This section is completed only if diversity of citizenship was selected as the Basis of Jurisdiction under Section II.
- IV.** CASE ASSIGNMENT AND NATURE OF SUIT: The assignment of a judge to your case will depend on the category you select that best represents the primary cause of action found in your complaint. **You may select only one nature of suit.** For nature of suit descriptions, see [here](#).
- VI.** CAUSE OF ACTION: Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing and write a brief statement of the primary cause.
- VIII.** RELATED CASE(S), IF ANY: If you indicated that there is a related case, you must complete a related case form, which may be obtained from the Clerk's Office.

Because of the need for accurate and complete information, you should ensure the accuracy of the information provided prior to signing the form.

for the



Plaintiff(s)

V.

U.S. Department of Justice

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

To: *(Defendant's name and address)* U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Daniel J. Freeman
Democratic National Committee

Daniel J. Freeman
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____ , a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____ , and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____ , who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*:

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Print

Save As...

Reset

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Columbia



Democratic National Committee

Plaintiff(s)

v.

U.S. Department of Justice

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: *(Defendant's name and address)* U.S. Department of Justice
c/o Attorney General Todd Blanche
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20530

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Daniel J. Freeman
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*:

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Print

Save As...

Reset

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Columbia



Democratic National Committee

Plaintiff(s)

v.

U.S. Department of Justice

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: *(Defendant's name and address)* U.S. Department of Justice
c/o Civil Process Clerk, USAO for the District of Columbia
USADC.ServiceCivil@usdoj.gov
601 D Street NW
Washington, DC 20530

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are:

Daniel J. Freeman
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-2928

PROOF OF SERVICE*(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))*

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
 was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

☐ I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
 _____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
 on *(date)* _____, and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

☐ I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____, who is
 designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
 _____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

☐ Other *(specify)*:

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Print

Save As...

Reset