



August 1, 2025

VIA Electronic Delivery

Department of Health Care Services
Office of Legal Services
ATTN: PRA Request
P.O. Box 997413, MS 0012
Sacramento, CA 95899-7413
Via online portal

Re: California Public Records Act Request

Dear Public Records Officer:

Pursuant to the California Public Records Act (“CPRA”), California Government Code § 7920.000 et seq. (“CPRA”), and Article I, § 3(b) of the California Constitution, Democracy Forward Foundation submits this request for records.

Records Requested

Democracy Forward Foundation (“DFF”) requests that the California Department of Health Care Services (“DHCS”) produce the following within ten (10) business days:

All electronic communications (including email messages, complete email chains, calendar invitations, or attachments thereto, as well as any text messages or messages sent on messaging platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Skype, WhatsApp, Signal, or GChat) between (a) The DHCS officials included below and (b) the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (“CMS”) officials included below regarding (c) the Trump administration’s efforts to obtain data requested in CMS Deputy Administrator Drew Snyder’s May 26th letter, *Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Open Borders* and subsequent communication on the matter.¹

a. DHCS Officials:

- I. DHCS Director Michelle Baass
- II. Assistant Director Tracy Arnold
- III. Chief Deputy Director & State Medicaid Director Tyler Sadwith

¹Drew Snyder, *SUBJECT: Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Open Borders*, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (May 27, 2025), <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/open-borders-ao-notification-states.pdf>.

- IV. Assistant State Medicaid Director Lindy Harrington
- V. Legislative & Governmental Affairs Deputy Director Carol Gallegos

b. CMS Officials:

- I. Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz
- II. Deputy Administrator and Chief of Staff Stephanie Carlton
- III. Deputy Administrator John Brooks
- IV. Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services Former Director and Deputy Administrator for the Drew Snyder
- V. Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services Interim Acting Director Caprice Knapp
- VI. Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services Deputy Director Anne Marie Costello
- VII. Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services Deputy Director Sara Vitolo

This request seeks records from May 26, 2025 until the date of the search.

Scope of Search

Please search for records regardless of format, including paper records, electronic records, audiotapes, videotapes, photographs, data, and graphical materials. This request includes, without limitation, all correspondence, letters, emails, text messages, calendar entries, facsimiles, telephone messages, voice mail messages, and transcripts, notes, minutes, or audio or video recordings of any meetings, telephone conversations, or discussions. In searching for responsive records, however, please exclude publicly available materials such as news clips that mention otherwise responsive search terms.

The Public Records Act requires agencies to disclose information, with only limited exceptions for information that would harm an interest protected by a specific exemption or where disclosure is prohibited by law. California Government Code § 7922.525(b). In the event that the department wishes to withhold any documents or portions of documents, or deny our request, please provide us with a written justification explaining the decision to withhold records. California Government Code § 7922.535. We also reserve the right to initiate proceedings for injunctive or declarative relief or writ of mandate to enforce our right to inspect records. California Government Code § 7923.

If requested records are located in, or originated in, another agency, department, office, installation or bureau, please refer this request or any relevant portion of this request to the appropriate entity.

To the extent that the records are readily reproducible in a searchable, electronic format, we would prefer to receive the records in that format. However, if certain records are not available in that format, we are willing to accept the best available copy of each such record.

Please respond to this request in writing within 10 business days as required under the Public Records Act. California Government Code § 7922.540. If a determination on the disclosure of certain records cannot be made within the 10-day period, please notify us of the extension and the reasons for the extension. California Government Code § 7922.535(b).

Request for Fee Waiver

Democracy Forward Foundation requests a waiver of document search, review, and duplication fees associated with processing records for this request.

The requested waiver is in the public interest because providing the copy of the information sought primarily benefits the general public. Democracy Forward Foundation has a demonstrated ability to disseminate information of public interest requested through freedom of information statutes, and based upon responses to this request may assist in publicizing records received to contribute to the public's understanding of communications DHCS officials may be having with individuals associated with the federal government regarding this high-profile matter.²

DFF has a demonstrated ability to disseminate information of public interest requested through FOIA. When DFF obtains materials through FOIA requests that are of significant public interest, DFF's communications staff regularly works to ensure that these materials and their contents are featured in press articles educating the public about the operation of government; many articles feature additional commentary and analysis from DFF staff about those materials and their relevance to policy issues of public interest. Indeed, records received by DFF have

² Ahmed Aboulenein and Kanishka Singh, *US Health Department Hands Over Medicaid Personal Data to ICE*, Reuters (Jul. 17, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-health-department-hands-over-medicaid-personal-data-ice>; Jessica Glenza, *ICE Given Access to Medicaid Data In Move Critics Call A Privacy Betrayal*, The Guardian (Jul. 17, 2025), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jul/17/ice-access-medicaid-data-personal-information>; Jenny Jarvie and Hannah Fry, *ICE Is Gaining Access to Trove of Medicaid Records, Adding New Perils for Immigrants*, Los Angeles Times (Jul. 17, 2025), <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-07-17/ice-getting-access-to-medicaid-records-sparks-new-fears-across-california>; Jude Joffe-Block, *States Sue Trump Administration For Sharing Health Data with DHS*, NPR (Jul. 1, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/07/01/nx-s1-5453885/medicaid-data-immigration-dhs-lawsuit>; Tyler Katzenberger, *California Leads State Lawsuit Against White House Sharing Health Data Amid ICE Raids*, Politico (Jul. 1, 2025), <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/07/01/california-immigrant-health-data-lawsuit-00435701>; Kimberly Kindy and Amanda Seitz, *Trump Administration Hands Over Medicaid Recipients' Personal Data, Including Addresses, to ICE*, Associated Press (Jul. 17, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-medicaid-trump-ice>; Danielle Wallace, *California Sues Trump Admin Again, This Time Over Medicaid Data Transfer to DHS*, Fox News (Jul. 2, 2025), <https://www.yahoo.com/news/california-sues-trump-admin-again>.

previously formed the basis of news reports.³

Conclusion

If you need clarification as to the scope of the request, have any questions, or foresee any obstacles to releasing fully the requested records within ten business days, please contact me as soon as possible at foia@democracyforward.org.

We appreciate your assistance and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

/s/ Skye Perryman

³ See, e.g., Alexander Nazaryan, *Why did right-wing troll Charles C. Johnson meet with Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross?*, Yahoo News (May 14, 2019), <https://news.yahoo.com/why-did-rightwing-troll-charles-c-johnson-want-to-meet-with-commerce-secretary-wilbur-ross-090000636.html>; Derek Kravitz and Jack Gillum, *"Happy to Do It": Emails Show Current FAA Chief Coordinated With Ex-Lobbyist Colleagues on Policy*, ProPublica (Mar. 27, 2019), <https://www.propublica.org/article/dan-elwell-current-faa-chief-coordinated-with-ex-lobbyist-colleagues-on-policy>; Hamid Aleaziz, *Emails Show US Border Officials Didn't Receive "Zero Tolerance" Guidance Until After the Policy Was Enacted*, BuzzFeed News (Feb. 28, 2019), <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/hamedaleaziz/zero-tolerance-policy-guidance-dhs-family-separation>; Jonathan Cohn and Jeffrey Young, *Emails Show Trump Administration Was Told Obamacare Ad Cuts Could Hurt Enrollment*, Huffpost (Dec. 17, 2018), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-verma-obamacare-advertising-cut_us_5c115061e4b084b082ff8dba; Madison Pauly, *When the Biggest Prison Company Complained About a California Sanctuary Law, ICE Listened*, Mother Jones (Dec. 7, 2018), <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2018/12/geo-memo-private-prison-california-immigration/>; Eliza Rellman, *'Just answer the question and kill this story': In internal emails, Heather Nauert criticized Rex Tillerson's refusal to deny reports that he called Trump a 'moron,'* Business Insider (Nov. 2, 2018), <https://www.businessinsider.com/heather-nauert-rex-tillerson-trump-moron-2018-11>; Rebecca Klein, *Lawsuit Accuses Betsy DeVos And Her Deputies Of Being Motivated By Sexism*, HuffPost (Oct. 31, 2018), https://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us_5bd9ff6ee4b01abe6a1ad4a9; Nick Penzenstadler, *A year after Vegas shooting, ATF emails reveal blame, alarm over bump stocks*, USA Today (Oct. 1, 2018), <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/10/01/year-after-vegas-shooting-atf-emails-reveal-blame-alarm-over-bump-stocks/1432137002/>; Jessica Kwong, *Ivanka Trump was more than complicit in Obama equal pay rollback she had a hand in it, watchdog alleges*, Newsweek (Aug. 29, 2018), <https://www.newsweek.com/ivanka-trump-equal-pay-complicit-obama-1093833>; Vera Bergengruen, *New Emails Show What Happens When The Pentagon Has To Scramble To Catch Up To Trump*, BuzzFeed News (July 25, 2018), <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/verabergengruen/these-emails-show-what-happens-when-the-white-house-keeps>; Erin Dooley, *Exclusive: Former for-profit college executive shaped Education Department policy that could benefit former employers: Documents*, ABC News (May 15, 2017), <https://abcnews.go.com/US/exclusive-profit-college-executive-shaped-education-department-policy/story?id=55108981>; Heidi Przybyla, *Notes, emails reveal Trump appointees' war to end HHS teen pregnancy program*, NBC News (Mar. 20, 2018), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/notes-emails-reveal-trump-appointees-war-end-hhs-teen-pregnancy-n857686>; Dominic Holden, *Documents Show The Trump Administration Approved Bump Stocks Before It Opposed Them*, BuzzFeed News (Mar. 22, 2018), <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/dominicholden/trump-administration-bump-stocks>; Bernard Condon, *Trump Advisor Denies He Cheered End of Tunnel Funding Deal*, Associated Press (Feb. 13, 2018), available at <https://www.usnews.com/news/business/articles/2018-02-13/trump-adviser-denies-he-cheered-end-of-tunnel-funding-deal>; Celeste Katz, *Interior Department tapped wildfire preparedness funds for Ryan Zinke helicopter tour*, Newsweek (Dec. 29, 2017), <https://www.newsweek.com/ryan-zinke-interior-department-helicopters-wildfires-757857>.

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