

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

DEMOCRACY FORWARD
FOUNDATION,

Plaintiff,

v.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 1:25-cv-1535 (APM)

STIPULATED PRESERVATION ORDER

Upon consideration of the Parties' Joint Motion to Enter a Stipulated Preservation Order and to Hold in Abeyance the Hearing on Plaintiff's Motion for a Preservation Order, ECF No. 22, it is hereby ORDERED that the Parties' motion is GRANTED.

It is further:

ORDERED that Defendant U.S. Department of State ("State") shall as soon as practicable and within 1 day of this Order, send a preservation notice to U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio reminding him of his preservation obligations, making him aware that a stipulated preservation order has been entered in this case, and directing him to preserve and not to delete: (1) any text messages, including those on Signal or similar applications; and (2) other Signal records, including records showing chat names and participants, that are potentially responsive to FOIA request F-2025-13426; it is further

ORDERED that Defendant State, through a competent records official, shall submit a declaration to this Court within 7 days of this Order detailing the steps taken to preserve all records potentially responsive to FOIA request F-2025-13426 from government-issued and personal devices, providing an estimate of the volume of potentially responsive records

collected and preserved, informing the court of State's efforts to determine whether any records potentially responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA request have been deleted or lost since the submission of the relevant FOIA requests, and stating when a litigation hold was issued specific to this case and to whom it was sent; and it is further

ORDERED that Plaintiff's Motion for a Preservation Order, ECF No. 11, is hereby DENIED without prejudice, and the hearing on the motion set for September 3, 2025, is hereby HELD IN ABEYANCE pending State's submission of the declaration required by this Order.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: 9/02/2025

Amit P
Mehta

Digitally signed by
Amit P Mehta
Date: 2025.09.02
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HON. AMIT P. MEHTA
U.S. District Judge