

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

JUDICIAL WATCH, INC.,)
425 Third Street SW, Suite 800)
Washington, DC 20024,)
)
Plaintiff,)
) Case No.:
v.)
)
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,)
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW)
Washington, DC 20530,)
)
Defendant.)
)

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Judicial Watch, Inc. brings this action against Defendant U.S. Department of Justice to compel compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 (“FOIA”). As grounds therefor, Plaintiff alleges as follows:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B) and 28 U.S.C. § 1331.
2. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e).

PARTIES

3. Plaintiff Judicial Watch, Inc. is a not-for-profit, educational organization incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia and headquartered at 425 Third Street SW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20024. Plaintiff seeks to promote transparency, integrity, and accountability in government and fidelity to the rule of law. As part of its mission, Plaintiff regularly requests records from federal agencies pursuant to FOIA. Plaintiff analyzes the

agencies' responses and disseminates both its findings and the requested records to the American public to inform them about "what their government is up to."

4. Defendant U.S. Department of Justice ("DOJ") is an agency of the U.S. Government and is headquartered at 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20530. Defendant has possession, custody, and control of public records to which Plaintiff seeks access.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A. Office of Legislative Affairs Request

5. On May 30, 2025, Plaintiff submitted a FOIA request to the Office of Legislative Affairs, a component of Defendant, seeking access to the following records:

Any and all communications in any form from Jan. 1, 2019 to Dec. 31, 2020 between officials in the Office of Legislative Affairs and Sen. Chuck Grassley, Sen. Lindsey Graham, and/or any official on the Senate Judiciary Committee concerning Planned Parenthood, abortion, and/or the transfer of human fetal tissue.

6. By letter dated June 27, 2025, the Office of Information Policy acknowledged receipt of the request on May 30, 2025, assigned it tracking number FOIA-2025-04678, and informed Plaintiff that it had invoked FOIA's 10-day extension of time provision for "unusual circumstances."

7. Plaintiff has received no further communication from the Office of Information Policy regarding the request.

B. Office of Attorney General Request

8. On May 30, 2025, Plaintiff submitted a FOIA request to the Office of Attorney General, a component of Defendant, seeking access to the following records:

Any and all communications in any form from Jan. 1, 2019 to Dec. 31, 2020 between Attorney General Bill Barr and Sen. Chuck Grassley, Sen. Lindsey Graham, and/or any official on the Senate

Judiciary Committee concerning Planned Parenthood, abortion, and/or the transfer of human fetal tissue.

9. By letter dated June 27, 2025, the Office of Information Policy acknowledged receipt of the request on May 30, 2025, assigned it tracking number FOIA-2025-04677, and informed Plaintiff that it had invoked FOIA's 10-day extension of time provision for "unusual circumstances."

10. Plaintiff has received no further communication from the Office of Information Policy regarding the request.

11. As of the date of this Complaint, Defendant has failed to: (i) determine whether to comply with the requests; (ii) notify Plaintiff of any such determination or the reasons therefor; (iii) advise Plaintiff of the right to appeal any adverse determination; or (iv) produce the requested records or otherwise demonstrate that the requested records are exempt from production.

COUNT I
(Violation of FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552)

12. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 11 as if fully stated herein.

13. Defendant is in violation of FOIA.

14. Plaintiff is being irreparably harmed by Defendant's violation of FOIA, and Plaintiff will continue to be irreparably harmed unless Defendant is compelled to comply with the law.

15. Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law.

16. To trigger FOIA's administrative exhaustion requirement, Defendant was required to make final determinations on Plaintiff's requests by July 15, 2025. Because

Defendant failed to issue a final determination within the time required by FOIA, Plaintiff is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court: (1) order Defendant to search for any and all records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA requests and demonstrate that it employed search methods reasonably likely to lead to the discovery of records responsive to the requests; (2) order Defendant to produce, by a date certain, any and all non-exempt records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA requests and a *Vaughn* index of any responsive records withheld under claim of exemption; (3) enjoin Defendant from continuing to withhold any and all non-exempt records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA requests; (4) grant Plaintiff an award of attorneys' fees and other litigation costs reasonably incurred in this action pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(E); and (5) grant Plaintiff such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: December 23, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Meredith L. Di Liberto
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