

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

JUDICIAL WATCH, INC.,)
425 Third Street SW, Suite 800)
Washington, DC 20024,)
)
Plaintiff,)
) Civil Action No.
v.)
)
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION,)
1050 First Street, NE)
Washington, DC 20463,)
)
Defendant.)
)

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Judicial Watch, Inc. brings this action against Defendant Federal Election Commission to compel compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552. 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, accountability, and integrity 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

responses and disseminates its findings and the requested records to the American public to inform them about “what their government is up to.”

4. Defendant Federal Election Commission is an agency of the United States Government and is headquartered at 1050 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20463. Defendant has possession, custody, and control of records to which Plaintiff seeks access.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

5. On September 18, 2025, Plaintiff submitted a FOIA request to Defendant seeking access to:

1. Records, including, reports, audits, or investigations of ActBlue's donor verification processes, donor irregularities or potential donor fraud.
2. Communications between the FEC's Office of Compliance and any state attorney general's office or the U.S. Department of Justice, about any alleged irregularities in ActBlue's donor verification policies and procedures, donor irregularities, or potential donor fraudulent activity.

The time frame of the request was identified as “January 1, 2020, to present.”

6. By email dated September 23, 2025, Defendant acknowledged receiving Plaintiff's request on September 19, 2025 and advised Plaintiff that the request had been assigned tracking number: FOIA Request 2025-304.

7. As of the date of this Complaint, Defendant has failed to: (i) determine whether to comply with the request; (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)

8. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 7 as if fully stated herein.

9. Defendant is in violation of FOIA.

10. 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 it.

11. To trigger FOIA's administrative exhaustion requirement, Defendant was required to make a final determination on Plaintiff's request by October 17, 2025, at the latest. Because Defendant failed to make a final determination within the time limits set by FOIA, Plaintiff is deemed to have exhausted its administrative appeal remedies.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court: (1) order Defendant to conduct searches for any and all records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA request and demonstrate that it employed search methods reasonably likely to lead to the discovery of records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA request; (2) order Defendant to produce, by a date certain, any and all non-exempt records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA request and *Vaughn* indices 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 request; (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: January 20, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Michael Bekesha
Michael Bekesha
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