	Case 2:24-cv-00314-SMM Document 26	Filed 09/30/24 Page 1 of 28
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Scharf-Norton Center for Constitutional Litigation at the GOLDWATER INSTITUTE Jonathan Riches (025712) Stacy Skankey (035589) 500 E. Coronado Rd. Phoenix, Arizona 85004 (602) 462-5000 litigation@goldwaterinstitute.org Attorneys for Plaintiff IN THE UNITED STAT FOR THE DISTRI	TES DISTRICT COURT ICT OF ARIZONA
8 9	Barry Goldwater Institute for Public Policy Research,	No. 2:24-cv-00314-SMM
10 11	Plaintiffs, vs.	PLAINTIFF'S CONSOLIDATED REPLY IN SUPPORT OF
	U.S. Department of Education,	MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT
12	Defendants,	-AND- RESPONSE IN OPPOSITION TO
13		DEFENDANT'S CROSS-MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT
14 15		
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18	Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Pro-	cedure 56 the Goldwater Institute
19	("Institute") submits this Consolidated Reply	
20	Judgment (Doc. 18) and Response in Opposi	
21	("Department") Cross-Motion for Summary	*
22		NTS AND AUTHORITIES
23	SUMMARY O	FARGUMENT
24	The Institute submitted a Freedom of	Information Act ("FOIA") request to the
25	Department on December 4, 2023 ("Request	"). Pl.'s Statement of Facts (Doc. 19)
26	("PSOF") ¶ 8. The Request sought a limited	
27	Department's public allegations against Gran	nd Canyon University's ("GCU") purported
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violations of the Higher Education Act, including how the Department coordinated with 2 other federal agencies. *Id.* ¶¶ 9–10.

3 The Request was made after the Department issued a highly public statement in 4 October 2023 announcing a \$37.7 million fine against GCU—the largest fine in agency 5 history by a long shot. PSOF ¶ 3. The Department's press release pertaining to this 6 astronomical fine garnered significant media attention. PSOF ¶ 7. The Department 7 appeared to seek precisely this sort of media attention when it announced its historic fine 8 against GCU. Id. Press reports at the time also indicated that the Department coordinated 9 with the White House and other federal agencies regarding its activities directed against 10 GCU. Id. The Request sought a limited category of information regarding the 11 Department's highly public activities on issues of public concern. PSOF ¶¶ 9–10.

12 After the Institute submitted its request, the Department failed to produce *any* 13 records within the required statutory time frame. PSOF ¶ 30–31. As a result, the Institute 14 filed a Complaint to compel production of the documents. PSOF ¶ 32. After this case 15 was filed, the Department provided some documents, but those documents were heavily 16 redacted, resulting in the withholding of nearly the entirety of the records. PSOF ¶¶ 33– 17 34.

18 The Institute then moved for summary judgment regarding the Department's 19 failure to comply with FOIA's statutory production deadline and asserting that the 20 Department improperly applied FOIA exemptions to the heavily redacted records that it 21 produced.

22 When the Department filed its Response to that motion, combined with its own 23 Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment, it included declarations from Department 24 personnel and a Vaughn index. As set out below, those declarations and Vaughn index 25 show that the Department has improperly withheld public information.

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LEGAL ARGUMENT

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The Institute is entitled to declaratory relief that the Department failed to respond within the statutory time period.

This action was originally filed because the Department failed to respond to the
Institute's FOIA request within the timeframe proscribed by law, and the Institute is
entitled to a declaration regarding the Department's FOIA violation on that issue. The
Declaratory Judgment Act allows the court to "declare the rights and other legal relations
of any interested party seeking such declaration, whether or not further relief is or could
be sought." 28 U.S.C. § 2201(a).

It is undisputed that the Department failed to respond to the Institute's Request
within the statutory period. PSOF ¶ 31; Defendant's Controverting Statement of Facts
(Doc. 23) ("DCSOF") ¶ 31. With no legal or factual dispute on this issue, the Institute is
entitled to summary judgment in its favor.

The Department contends that its production of the almost entirely redacted
documents moots the Institute's statutory deadline claim. That is only true with respect
to the Institute's request for an injunction, not declaratory relief. *See, e.g., Transgender L. Ctr. v. Immigr. & Customs Enf 't*, 46 F.4th 771 (9th Cir. 2022) (district court granted
declaratory relief that the agency failed to timely respond to their FOIA requests but
otherwise ruled for the agency); *Muckrock, LLC v. CIA*, 300 F. Supp.3d 108 (D.D.C.
2018) (granting declaratory relief but not injunctive relief).

What's more, the Department has engaged in a pattern or practice of violating the
FOIA's time limits. *Hajro v. U.S. Citizenship & Immigr. Servs.*, 811 F.3d 1086, 1103 (9th
Cir. 2015). An agency engages in a pattern or practice of violating the FOIA if: "(1) the
agency's FOIA violation was not merely an isolated incident, (2) the plaintiff was
personally harmed by the alleged policy, and (3) the plaintiff himself has a sufficient
likelihood of future harm by the policy or practice." *Id.* An agency's production of
documents does not moot the pattern-or-practice claim. *Id.*

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The Institute submitted this Request on December 4, 2023. The Department
responded by stating that its average processing time for FOIA requests was 185
business days. PSOF ¶¶ 8–15. It specified no unusual circumstances that would permit
any extension beyond the 20-business-day deadline set by the FOIA. PSOF ¶ 16. In
other words, the Department affirmed that it would *not* comply with the FOIA's statutory
deadline—and made no attempt to comply with any of the FOIA's other requirements
that would permit it additional time to respond in certain circumstances.

8 Then, after the statutory timeline lapsed, the Institute sent a written demand to the 9 Department seeking production of the documents and asserting that it would seek to 10 compel production if the records were not produced. PSOF ¶ 24. The Department once 11 again responded that average processing for a FOIA request was 185 business days, and 12 again failed to specify any unusual circumstances that prevented it from responding 13 within the statutory deadline. PSOF $\P\P$ 25–26. Thus, again, the Department's 14 communication simply indicated that it again would not comply with the FOIA's 15 requirements. It was only after the Institute filed this action that the Department 16 provided any form of response and production of documents. PSOF ¶¶ 32–37.

The Department's failure to comply within the statutory timeline of the FOIA was
not an isolated incident. The Institute has submitted other FOIA requests to the
Department, for which the Department has also not produced records within the
statutory deadline. *See* Plaintiff's Controverting Statement of Facts ¶ 32. Indeed, *another*FOIA request submitted by the Institute, and based on the Department's response to this
request, is currently the subject of an administrative appeal with the Department. *Id.*

In this case, the Institute was required to issue repeated demands to the Department for it to comply with the FOIA, and was eventually forced to file this lawsuit in order to compel production after the Department made it clear that it had no intention of complying with the requirements of federal law. That added significant time and expense to this matter, and placed an unnecessary burden on the Institute. The Department's actions have also deprived the public of timely information about an issue

1 of national public concern that has garnered substantial media attention. A declaration 2 from this Court will address both the Department's flagrant delay regarding this FOIA 3 request, and encourage the Department to refrain from such delay when processing 4 future requests. See Owen v. U.S. Immigr., No. CV 22-0550-DSF (AFMX), 2023 WL 5 9470904, at *8 (C.D. Cal. Jan. 12, 2023) ("declaratory judgment is an appropriate way 6 address FOIA delays [because it] ... 'can be a message not only to the parties but also to 7 the public' as 'the repeated, routine violation of [FOIA] deadlines by agencies has been a 8 continual source of concern for Congress' and delays 'continue as one of the most 9 significant FOIA problems." (citations omitted)).

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II. The Department did not narrowly construe the FOIA exemptions and did not meet its burden of proving the FOIA exemptions apply.

12 The purpose of FOIA is to "ensure an informed citizenry, vital to the functioning 13 of a democratic society, needed to check against corruption and to hold the governors 14 accountable to the governed." N.L.R.B. v. Robbins Tire & Rubber Co., 437 U.S. 214, 242 15 (1978). The government bears the burden of proving that any claimed FOIA exemption 16 applies. Shannahan v. IRS, 672 F.3d 1142, 1148 (9th Cir. 2012). To justify withholding 17 public information, "the government must provide tailored reasons in response to a 18 FOIA request. It may not respond with boilerplate or conclusory statements." Id. (citing 19 Wiener v. FBI, 943 F.2d 972, 978–79 (9th Cir. 1991)).

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A. The Department has not met its burden of establishing that Exemption 5 applies.

Exemption 5 permits an agency to withhold only those public records that are
"inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters that would not be available by
law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency." 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5).
Exemption 5 exempts a limited category of records that "would be protected in litigation
by the attorney work-product, attorney-client, and deliberative process privileges." *ACLU of N. Cal. v. U.S. Dep't of Just.*, 880 F.3d 473, 483 (9th Cir. 2018).

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1 To meet its burden of proving that Exemption 5 applies, the Department must 2 show that "(A) the materials at issue are covered by the deliberative process privilege, 3 and (B) it is reasonably foreseeable that release of those materials would cause harm to 4 an interest protected by that privilege." Reps. Comm. for Freedom of the Press v. FBI, 3 5 F.4th 350, 361 (D.C. Cir. 2021).

6 The deliberative process privilege covers "documents reflecting advisory" 7 opinions, recommendations, and deliberations that are part of a process by which 8 government decisions and policies are formulated." Id. (citation omitted and cleaned up). 9 The privilege applies if an agency can show "that a document is both (1) predecisional 10 or antecedent to the adoption of agency policy and (2) deliberative, meaning it must 11 actually be related to the process by which policies are formulated." Transgender L. Ctr., 12 46 F.4th at 783 (citations omitted and cleaned up). Predecisional documents are those 13 that include "subjective documents which reflect the personal opinions of the writer 14 rather than the policy of the agency." Maricopa Audubon Soc'y v. U.S. Forest Serv., 108 15 F.3d 1089, 1093 (9th Cir. 1997) (citation omitted). However, drafts are not necessarily 16 covered by the deliberative process privilege. Transgender L. Ctr., 46 F.4th at 783. 17 Drafts must also include references to the decision to which the document pertains in 18 order to qualify. Id. Similarly, government "deliberations regarding how best to address 19 public relations matters or possible responses to an inquiry received from an outside 20 entity are not necessarily the type of policy decisions the privilege covers." Id. (citation 21 omitted and cleaned up) (emphasis added).

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The Department failed to meet its burden of proving that Exemption 5 applies to 23 all documents in this case because several of the documents withheld were not 24 predecisional to any agency policy.

25 First, the Department applied Exemption 5 to all information relating to the fine 26 against GCU. However, the fine against GCU is not a policy decision by the 27 Department. It is an *enforcement* decision. A policy is "[a] standard course of action that 28 has been officially established by an organization, business, political party, etc."

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1 POLICY, Black's Law Dictionary (12th ed. 2024). A *policy* applies broadly to all parties 2 subject to it, and results from general reasoning and the formulation of a principle. An 3 enforcement decision, by contrast, is a case-specific choice to implement such a 4 principle with respect to a particular entity, or to impose some penalty¹—as here, for 5 example, where the Department's action is a selective targeting of one private entity, and 6 one by which the Department appears to have deviated from past policies by imposing a 7 fine that has no historical precedent. The records sought pertain to communications 8 about that *enforcement* decision, not a "policy" of the Department. Consequently, 9 Exemption 5 does not apply to any of the records that have been withheld.

Second, the Department applied Exemption 5 to *objective* material, which is not
privileged. See Exhibit 1² at 1–2. Predecisional documents are those that are *subjective*,
or pertain to the *personal opinions* of the writer. See Maricopa Audubon Soc'y, 108 F.3d
at 1093. Facts that are relayed by agency personnel, on the other hand, are inherently not
subjective, and therefore cannot fall within the category of predecisional documents. The
Department may only apply Exemption 5 to those portions of the records that are
predecisional and deliberative.

Third, the Department applied Exemption 5 to communications with outside
parties and non-agency personnel. *See* Exhibit 1 at 2–7. But Exemption 5 only applies to
"inter-*agency* or intra-*agency*" documents. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5) (emphasis added). It
does not apply to communications with outside parties. Further, any assertion of
attorney-client privilege or attorney work-product privilege also does not attach when
the communications have been shared with outside parties. *See Jud. Watch, Inc. v. U.S.*

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²⁷ ² To aid the Court in understanding which documents are in dispute, the Institute
 ²⁸ ¹ provided a Response to the Department's *Vaughn* Index, attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

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¹ To borrow terminology from another context, *enforcement* decisions are "adjudicative in nature," whereas *policymaking* is "legislative." *75 Acres, LLC v. Miami-Dade Cnty., Fla.*, 338 F.3d 1288, 1293–94 (11th Cir. 2003); *People of State of Ill. v. United States*, 666 F.2d 1066, 1073 (7th Cir. 1981); *Ass 'n of Nat'l Advertisers, Inc. v. FTC*, 627 F.2d

^{27 1151, 1161–62 (}D.C. Cir. 1979).

Postal Serv., 297 F. Supp.2d 252, 267 (D.D.C. 2004) (attorney-client privilege protects
 only those confidential communications between a client and an attorney for the purpose
 of obtaining or providing legal advice); *In re Sealed Case*, 146 F.3d 881, 884 (D.C. Cir.
 1998) (attorney-work product privilege protects only those mental impressions,
 conclusions, opinions, or legal theories of a party's attorney concerning litigation or
 documents prepared in anticipation of litigation).

Fourth, the Department applied Exemption 5 to communications regarding press
releases. *See* Exhibit 1 at 7–8. Deliberations about public relations or information to
outside entities are *not* policy decisions covered by Exemption 5, as they are neither
predecisional nor deliberative. *See Transgender L. Ctr.*, 46 F.4th at 783. All records
regarding the Department's press activities should therefore be immediately disclosed.

Fifth, the Department applied Exemption 5 to the subject lines in emails. *See*Exhibit 1 at 8–12. Subject lines of emails are not draft documents. *See Maricopa Audubon Soc'y*, 108 F.3d at 1093. And the Department has failed to prove how email
subject lines are related to the process by which policies are formulated.

16 Sixth, the Department applied Exemption 5 to post-decisional documents. See 17 Exhibit 1 at 12–14. Documents that lead to a policy decision may be predecisional, but 18 documents explaining or interpreting a decision after the fact are post-decisional and not 19 subject to the deliberative process privilege. Assembly of State of Cal. v. U.S. Dep't of 20 Com., 968 F.2d 916, 920 (9th Cir. 1992); see also Renegotiation Bd. v. Grumman 21 Aircraft Eng'g Corp., 421 U.S. 168, 184 (1975) (post-decisional memoranda set forth 22 the reasons for an agency decision already made and therefore were not privileged). 23 In this case, even assuming the Department's decision to fine GCU was a "policy," which it is not, that decision was made on October 22, 2023. See Defendant's 24

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³ Courts give agency affidavits a presumption of good faith. *Safecard Servs., Inc. v. SEC*, 926 F.2d 1197, 1200 (D.C. Cir. 1991).

Separate Statement of Facts (Doc. 23) ("DSSOF") ¶ 9.³ Any documents created after

October 22, 2023, are therefore post-decisional, and cannot be withheld under Exemption 5.

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B. The Department has not met its burden of establishing that Exemption 7(A) applies.

Exemption 7(A) applies to law enforcement records that "could reasonably be 5 expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings." 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(A). To apply 6 Exemption 7(A), the Department must prove that "disclosure (1) could reasonably be 7 expected to interfere with (2) enforcement proceedings that are (3) pending or 8 reasonably anticipated." Citizens for Resp. & Ethics in Wash. v. U.S. Dep't of Just., 746 9 F.3d 1082, 1096 (D.C. Cir. 2014) (citation omitted); see also Lewis v. IRS, 823 F.2d 375, 10 379 (9th Cir. 1987) (an agency must prove that documents would interfere with pending 11 enforcement proceedings). 12

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The Department has failed carry its burden of proof.

First, the Department applied Exemption 7(A) without establishing how
disclosure of the requested records would interfere with enforcement proceedings. Here,
the Department made its decision to impose a fine against GCU at the *conclusion* of its
investigation. *See* DSSOF ¶¶ 8–9. That investigation is no longer open.

The purpose of Exemption 7(A) is to prevent disclosures that could reveal the 18 government's case in court, evidence, strategy, or alert suspects to establish defenses. 19 Mavdak v. U.S. Dep't of Just., 218 F.3d 760, 762 (D.C. Cir. 2000). But disclosure of the 20 investigation materials could not interfere with the government's case in the pending 21 22 appeal. The Department has already disclosed its findings from its investigation and the 23 basis for imposing a fine. New evidence is not permitted on appeal. See, e.g., Tucker v. 24 Seattle Hous. Auth., 670 F. App'x 488, 489 (9th Cir. 2016). Therefore, it is improbable 25 that any *new* evidence would be revealed in the requested records. It is particularly 26 improbable given the limited scope of the records sought; namely, *inter*-agency

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1 communications, and communications pertaining to the Department's public activities, 2 including its media activities.

3 The harm the Department alleges is both speculative and conclusory. The 4 government must demonstrate that an exemption applies with tailored reasons and not 5 boilerplate or conclusory statements. Shannahan, 672 F.3d at 1148. The Department 6 does not explain how disclosing the limited information sought would reasonably interfere with the enforcement proceedings.

8 Second, the Department applied Exemption 7(A) to several records without any 9 justification whatsoever. The most egregious example is the Department's basis for 10 withholding Document 30. The Department states the definition of Exemption 7(A), but 11 fails to give any tailored reasoning to justify the withholding. See Exhibit 1 at 15. Those 12 records were not properly withheld and must be immediately disclosed. Shannahan, 672 13 F.3d at 1148.

14 *Third*, the Department applied Exemption 7(A) to communications with another 15 federal agency-the FTC. See Exhibit 1 at 15-16. Exemption 7(A) only prevents the 16 disclosure of records that would interfere with the withholding agency's enforcement 17 proceedings. Robbins Tire & Rubber Co., 437 U.S. at 227 (the intent of the exemption is 18 to prevent harm in the Government's case from allowing an opposing party earlier or 19 greater access to investigatory files). Moreover, the Department cannot claim Exemption 20 7(A) on behalf of *another* agency on the speculative basis that disclosure of the records 21 might interfere with *that* agency's separate investigation. At the very least, the 22 government is required to substantiate such an assertion with competent evidence from 23 that agency, which it has failed to do here.

The Department has not met its burden in proving that Exemption 7(A) applies to all documents it withheld.

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1	CONCLUSION
2	The Court should deny Defendant's Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment, and
3	grant summary judgment in favor of Plaintiff.
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8	RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 30th day of September, 2024 by:
9	/s/ Stacy Skankey
10	<u>/s/ Stacy Skankey</u> Jonathan Riches (0257120 Stacy Skankey (035589) Scharf-Norton Center for Constitutional Litigation at the GOLDWATER INSTITUTE
11	Scharf-Norton Center for Constitutional Litigation at the GOLDWATER INSTITUTE
12	Attorneys for Plaintiff
13	
14	
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17 18	
10	CEDTIFICATE OF SEDVICE
20	CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE Document Electronically Filed and Served on all counsel of record by ECF this
21	30th day of September, 2024.
22	50th day of September, 2024.
23	<u>/s/ Kris Schlott</u> Kris Schlott, Paralegal
24	Kills Selliott, I dialogai
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Exhibit 1

Goldwater Institute's Response to the Department's Vaughn Index

EXEMPTION 5 DISPUTED RECORDS

OBJECTIVE MATERIAL NOT PRIVILEGED

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
4	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000020	(b)(5)	"Relevant facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Maricopa Audubon Soc'y v. U.S.</i> <i>Forest Serv.</i> , 108 F.3d 1089, 1093 (9th Cir. 1997).
6	REVISED ED 24-000550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000024 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000026	(b)(5)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id.</i>
7	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000027 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000028	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	"Selective supporting facts" and "factual information" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id</i> .
39	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000091 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000093	(b)(5)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id</i> .
50	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000124 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000125	(b)(5) (b)(7)(A)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id</i> .
54	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000162 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000163	(b)(5)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id</i> .

Goldwater Institute's Response to the Department's Vaughn Index

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
96	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000520 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000522	(b)(5)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id</i> .
98	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000529 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000531	(b)(5)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id.</i>
112	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000564 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000565	(b)(5)	"Factual information" is not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id.</i>
113	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000566 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000567	(b)(5)	"Selective facts" are not subjective or the personal opinions of the writer. <i>Id</i> .

THIRD PARTY DISCLOSURE NOT PRIVILEGED

Doc	. Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
No			
29	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000073 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000074	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5).

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Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
32	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000078	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
69	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000276 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000277	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
70	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000278 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000280	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
72	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000307 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000311	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
73	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000312 - REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000314	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
75	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000319 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000321	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
82	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000345 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000348	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
83	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000349 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000351	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
84	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000352 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000356	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
85	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000357 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000358	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
86	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000359 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000360	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
88	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000367 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000373	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
91	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000387 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000388	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
103	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000545 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000546	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
108	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000558 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000559	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This includes communications from non-agency personnel via voicemail. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intraagency documents. <i>Id</i> .
120	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000644 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000648	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This includes communications from non-agency personnel via voicemail. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intraagency documents. <i>Id</i> .
121	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000649	(b)(5)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
122	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000650 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000652	(b)(5)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
124	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000656 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000661	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
126	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000664 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000667	(b)(5)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
130	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000777 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000779	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>

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Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
131	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000039 – ED 24- 00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000065	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel and GCU President Brian Mueller. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intraagency documents. <i>Id.</i>
132	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000066 – ED 24- 00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000067	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
133	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000068 – ED 24- 00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000069	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>
134	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000070	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
135	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000071 – ED 24- 00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000072	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
136	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000073 – ED 24- 00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000074	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id</i> .
137	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000075 – ED 24- 00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000076	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. <i>Id.</i>

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Doc.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
No.			
138	ED 24-00550-F (May 7, 2024)_000077	(b)(7)(a)	This document includes communications to non-agency personnel, including GCU Counsel. Exemption 5 only
			applies to inter- or intra- agency documents. Id.

Press Release Communications Not Privileged

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
1	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000001 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000002	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This includes emails with April Jordan, a FSA communications unit employee. Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Transgender L. Ctr. v. Immigr. & Customs Enf't</i> , 46 F.4th 771, 783 (9th Cir. 2022).
2	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000011 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000013	(b)(5)	This includes emails with April Jordan, a FSA communications unit employee. Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Id</i> .
3	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000016 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000019	(b)(5)	This includes emails with April Jordan, a FSA communications unit employee. Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Id</i> .
61	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000205	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This includes emails with April Jordan and Melody Cowan, FSA communication unit employees. Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Id</i> .
94	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000420 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000509	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Id.</i>

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Doc.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
No.			
101	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000536 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000539	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This includes emails with April Jordan and Melody Cowan, FSA communication unit employees. Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Id.</i>
128	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000670 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000671	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	This includes emails with April Jordan and Melody Cowan, FSA communication unit employees. Documents prepared for a press release are not a part of deliberative process privilege. <i>Id</i> .

Subject Lines of Emails are Not Privileged

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
5	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000021 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000023	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Maricopa Audubon</i> Soc'y, 108 F.3d at 1093.
11	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000038 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000039	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
12	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000040 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000041	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
15	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000046 -	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. Id.

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Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000047		
19	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000053	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
20	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000054	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
21	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000055	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
22	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000056	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
23	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000057 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000059	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
24	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000060 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000062	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
26	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000068 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000070	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
27	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000071	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
31	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000077	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
33	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000079 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000080	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
35	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000084 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000087	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
37	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000089	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
42	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000097 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000098	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
45	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000115 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000116	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
46	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000117	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
48	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000119 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000121	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
58	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000200 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000201	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .

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Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
60	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000204	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
68	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000275	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
76	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000326 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000327	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
77	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000328 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000329	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
78	EVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000330 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000331	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
79	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000332 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000334	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
99	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000532 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000534	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .
119	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000642 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000643	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id</i> .

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Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
125	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000662 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000663	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>
128	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000670 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000671	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	Subject lines of emails are not drafts. <i>Id.</i>

Post-decisional Documents Not Privileged

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
118	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000640 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000641	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Assembly of State of Cal. v. U.S. Dep't</i> <i>of Com.</i> , 968 F.2d 916, 920 (9th Cir. 1992).
119	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000642 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000643	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
120	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000644 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000648	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .

Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
121	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000649	(b)(5)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
122	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000650 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000652	(b)(5)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
123	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000653 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000654	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
124	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000656 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000661	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
125	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000662 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000663	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
126	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000664 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000667	(b)(5)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
127	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000668 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000669	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .

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Doc. No.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
128	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000670 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000671	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
129	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000775 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000776	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .
130	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000777 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000779	(b)(5) (b)(7)(a)	The Department approved the fine against GCU on October 22, 2023. Any documents after October 22, 2023 are post-decisional. <i>Id</i> .

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EXEMPTION 7(A) DISPUTED RECORDS

Definition of Exemption

Doc.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
No.			
30	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000075 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000076	(b)(7)(A)	There are no tailored reasons why the exemption applies other than the boilerplate definition of Exemption 7(A). <i>Shannahan v. IRS</i> , 672 F.3d 1142, 1148 (9th Cir. 2012).

Separate Investigations

Doc.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
<u>No.</u> 12	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000040 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F	(b)(5) (b)(7)(A)	This refers to a separate investigation. The Department does not have a reasonable expectation of interference
	(Apr. 15, 2024)_000041		with the GCU enforcement action. <i>N.L.R.B. v. Robbins</i> <i>Tire & Rubber Co.</i> , 437 U.S. 214, 227 (1978).
13	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000042 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000044	(b)(5) (b)(7)(A)	This refers to a separate unrelated investigation. The Department does not have a reasonable expectation of interference with the GCU enforcement action. <i>Id</i> .
30	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000075 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000076	(b)(7)(A)	This refers to a separate unrelated investigation. The Department does not have a reasonable expectation of interference with the GCU enforcement action. <i>Id</i> .
35	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000084 –	(b)(5) (b)(7)(A)	This refers to a separate investigation. The Department does not have a reasonable expectation of interference with the GCU enforcement action. <i>Id</i> .

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Doc.	Bates Number	Exemption	Reason Exemption Does Not Apply
No.	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000087		
42	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000097 – REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000098	(b)(5) (b)(7)(A)	This refers to a separate unrelated investigation. The Department does not have a reasonable expectation of interference with the GCU enforcement action. <i>Id</i> .
62	REVISED ED 24-00550-F (Apr. 15, 2024)_000206	(b)(5) (b)(7)(A)	This refers to a separate investigation. The Department does not have a reasonable expectation of interference with the GCU enforcement action. <i>Id</i> .