

October 31, 2017

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
The White House

Despite soliciting and collecting public comments on the proposal in December 2016, now under the Trump Administration, OIP has failed to finalize the policy or respond to multiple requests about its plans either to finalize or abandon the policy. This silence after soliciting public feedback on a proactive disclosure policy is particularly troubling.

Open government would increase government transparency and leverage the existing investment in FOIA disclosures. When an agency searches for, reviews, and processes information for release to a FOIA requester, it is, with the exception of first-party requests, preparing that information for release to the public. Federal agencies should simply take the final step and post that information on their websites. Placing this information in the public domain would allow the public to know what type of information is being requested, to search these prior productions for information relevant to their own purposes, and, perhaps, decrease the number for future requests or facilitate future requesters making more informed and targeted requests. Moreover, placing these information resources into the public domain has the potential to create unknown benefits, such as analyses of patterns in FOIA requests and harnessing of the information for other uses.

We understand the issues that need to be addressed to finalize

Directors Mulvaney and Pustay

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Sincerely,

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination
Committee

American Library Association

American Society of News Editors

Associated Press Media Editors

Association of Alternative Newsmedia

American Association of Law Libraries

Campaign for Accountability

Cause of Action Institute

Center for Responsive Politics

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in
Washington

Data Coalition

Demand Progress

Electronic Frontier Foundation

Electronic Privacy Information Center

Government Information Watch

National Security Archive

National Taxpayers Union

OpenTheGovernment

Project on Government Oversight

Public Citizen