



September 16, 2024

Via FOIA Portal

Office of Information Programs and Services (A/GIS/IPS)
Room B-266
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Freedom of Information Act Request: Ryan Wesley Routh

Dear FOIA Officer:

America First Legal Foundation is a national, nonprofit organization working to promote the rule of law in the United States, prevent executive overreach, and ensure due process and equal protection for all Americans, all to promote public knowledge and understanding of the law and individual rights guaranteed under the Constitution and laws of the United States. To that end, we file Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests on issues of pressing public concern, then disseminate the information we obtain, making documents broadly available to the public, scholars, and the media. Using our editorial skills to turn raw materials into distinct work, we distribute that work to a national audience through traditional and social media platforms. AFL has over 271,000 followers on X, and our Founder and President has over 729,000 followers on X.

I. Records Request

On Sunday, September 15, 2024, former President Donald J. Trump faced yet another apparent “attempted assassination,”¹ this time, while he was golfing at the Trump International Golf Course in West Palm Beach.² Reportedly, his Secret Service detail spotted Ryan Wesley Routh pointing a high-powered rifle from approximately 300 to

¹ Press Release, FBI Statement on Incident in West Palm Beach, Florida (Sept. 15, 2024), <https://perma.cc/K73Z-WG6W> (“The FBI has responded to West Palm Beach, Florida, and is investigating what appears to be an attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump.”).

² Kerry Breen & Anna Schechter, *What’s Known About Ryan Wesley Routh, Suspect in Possible Trump Assassination Attempt on Florida Golf Course*, CBS NEWS (Sept. 16, 2024), <https://perma.cc/5NB3-UAAT>.

611 Pennsylvania Ave SE #231
Washington, DC 20003

320 South Madison Avenue
Monroe, Georgia 30655

www.aflegal.org

500 yards away.³ Routh had a decades-long criminal history, publicly offered to facilitate deploying foreign fighters to Ukraine, and vocally criticized President Trump online—even immediately after the first assassination attempt.⁴ Because it is unclear to what extent Federal authorities had previously identified Routh as a potential threat to President Trump, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552, we request all records regarding **Ryan Wesley Routh**. The relevant time period for this request is from January 21, 2021, to the present.

II. Custodians

- A. All custodians in the Office of the Secretary of State at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- B. All custodians in the Office of the Deputy Secretary at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- C. All custodians in the Office of Arms Control and International Security at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- D. All custodians in the Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- E. All custodians in the Office of Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- F. All custodians in the Office of Management at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- G. All custodians in the Office of Political Affairs at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- H. All custodians in the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- I. All custodians in the Office of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*; see also Curt Devine et al., *Man Detained in Apparent Assassination Attempt on Trump Criticized Former President on Social Media*, CNN (Sept. 15, 2024), <https://perma.cc/U4HJ-B7PP>.

- J. All custodians in the Office of the Intelligence and Resources at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- K. All custodians in the Office of the Office of the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- L. All custodians in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.
- M. All custodians in the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine at the GS-14 pay scale and above or equivalent.

III. Fee Waiver Request

Per 5 U.S.C. § 552(4)(A)(iii), AFL requests a waiver of all search and duplication fees associated with this request. Furthermore, AFL has a demonstrated ability and intention to effectively convey the information broadly to the public. AFL's status as a representative of the news media has been recognized by other agencies for granting fee waivers by the Departments of Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Justice, Interior, and Homeland Security. Finally, as a non-profit organization, AFL has no commercial interest, and the request is made entirely to serve the public interest. We are, of course, available to provide additional information in writing or offline in support of this request. If AFL's request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact us immediately upon making that determination.

IV. Request for Expedited Processing

AFL hereby requests expedited processing pursuant to 22 C.F.R. § 171.12(d)(1)(i),(ii) and (iv). "Failure to obtain requested records on an expedited basis could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of [the former President of the United States and leading presidential candidate]." § 171.12(d)(1)(i). Furthermore, AFL is a requester "primarily engaged in disseminating information," and "there exists an urgency to inform the public concerning actual or alleged Federal Government activity." § 171.12(d)(1)(ii). Lastly, this most recent assassination attempt is "[a] matter of widespread and exceptional media interest in which there exist possible questions about the government's integrity that affect public confidence." § 171.12(d)(1)(iv).

There is a *compelling need* for expedited processing under *each* of these criteria. Multiple attempts have been made to assassinate the former President of the United States and the frontrunner in the upcoming presidential election—one of which resulted in the death of an innocent bystander—and expedited treatment is necessary

to ensure the safety of the former President and other innocent bystanders. Now, more than ever, the public deserves to know what the Department of State knew about this attempted assassin. As discussed above, America First Legal is a qualifying news media distributor, and has been recognized as such by many agencies. This manifest attack on our political process is of paramount and urgent interest to the media and all Americans.

V. Conclusion

If you have any questions about how to construe this request for records or believe further discussions regarding search and processing would facilitate a more efficient production of records of interest to AFL, please do not hesitate to contact me at FOIA@aflegal.org. Finally, if AFL's request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact us immediately upon making that determination.

Sincerely,

/s/ Will Scolinos

America First Legal Foundation