



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

December 28, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Alexander S. Elson  
National Student Legal Defense Network  
1015 15th Street NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20005  
alex@defendstudents.org

FOIA Request No. 21-02227-F

Dear Alexander S. Elson,

This letter is a response to your request dated July 15, 2021, requesting information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552. Your request was received in this office on July 16, 2021. Your request was assigned to Federal Student Aid (FSA) within the Department to search for documents that may be responsive to your request. In your request, you sought the following information:

1. “All complaints received by the Department, from March 1, 2020 to the present, regarding the administrative wage garnishment program.
2. All documents related to the Department’s decision in 2020 to ‘shut down the post office box where AWG payments were received.’ *Barber*, Dkt. 51 at 4.
3. All documents, from November 2020 to the present, referring or discussing or relating in any way to the post office box(es) where AWG payments were received or were to be received.
4. All documents referring, discussing, or relating to any continued use of administrative wage garnish[me]nts by the Department from January 2021 to the present, including communications with any third parties (including Maximus and ECMS) about wage garnishments.”

FSA has concluded its search for records responsive to your request. Enclosed are compressed PDF files containing 2272 pages of documents that are responsive to your request. However, certain information has been withheld according to FOIA Exemptions 4, 5, and 6, specified below:

- Records or portions of records relating to certain intra-agency information is exempt from disclosure pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4) of the FOIA. This exemption permits the withholding of trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person that is privileged or confidential.
- Records or portions of records relating to certain intra- and inter-agency information is exempt from disclosure pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5) of the FOIA. This exemption permits the withholding of “intra-agency or inter-agency memorandums or letters that

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would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency.”

- Records or portions of records relating to personal information is exempt pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6) of the FOIA. Disclosure of this information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Because this request is in litigation, if you have questions regarding this response, please contact Assistant United States Attorney Carol Federighi at [Carol.Federighi@usdoj.gov](mailto:Carol.Federighi@usdoj.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/ Joanna L. Torres

Joanna L. Torres

General Attorney

U.S. Department of Education