



A Request Too Far

**How election agencies can mitigate burden of
vexatious public record requests without
restricting the flow of civic information**

Election Science, Reform, & Administration Conference

Tallahassee, Florida

June 10, 2025

David Cuillier, University of Florida, cuillierd@ufl.edu



INVESTIGATE
ELECTION FRAUD NOW.
PROSECUTE
THOSE WHO ARE GUILTY

TRUMP
MAKING AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!

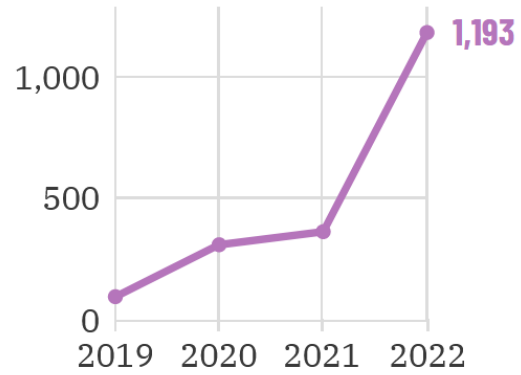
win Klein
TRUMP
2020
MORE BU

TRUMP
FOR TR

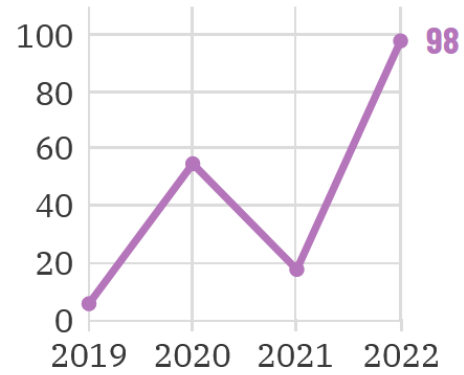


ARIZONA

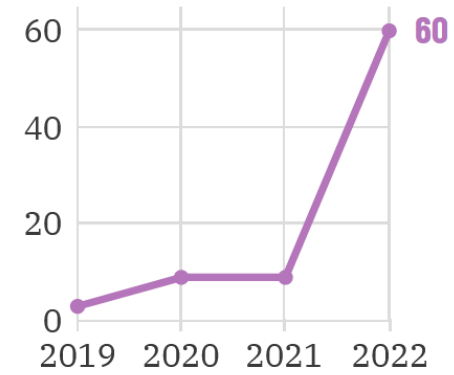
Maricopa County, AZ



Cochise County, AZ

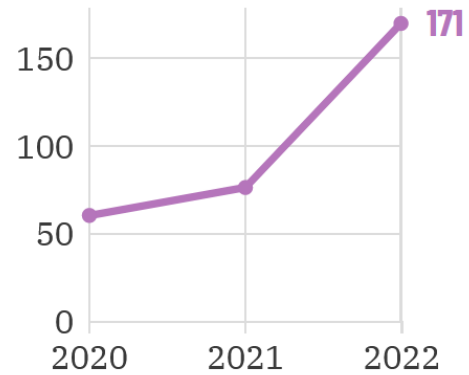


Gila County, AZ

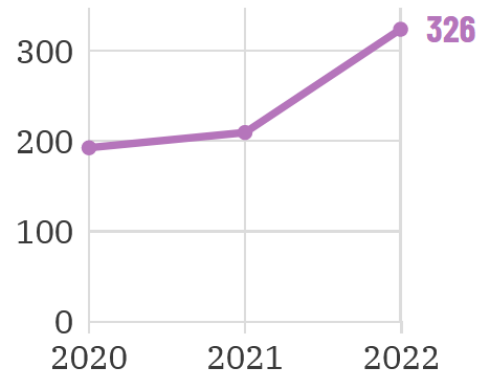


NATIONAL

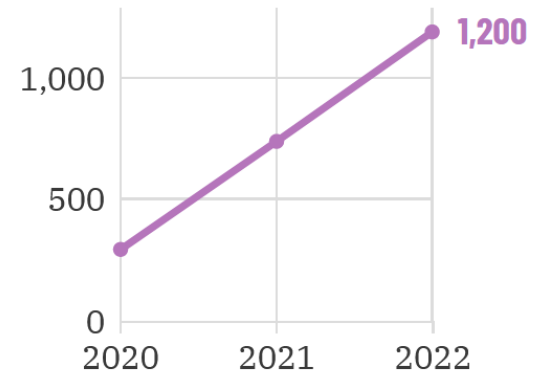
Wake County, NC



Fulton County, GA



Harris County, TX



SORRY FOR THE SLOW SERVICE!

**SENATOR SOUTHWORTH AND
HER CRONIES ARE TAKING UP
VALUABLE STAFF TIME WITH
RIDICULOUS OPEN RECORDS
REQUESTS IN ORDER TO ATTEMPT
TO UNDERMINE THE INTEGRITY OF
THE KENTUCKY ELECTION SYSTEM.
THIS ALSO PREVENTS US FROM
PREPARING AND CONDUCTING A
PROPER 2022 GENERAL ELECTION!**

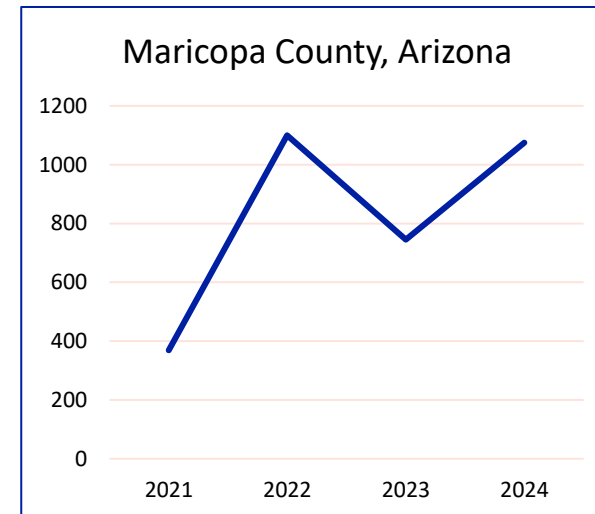
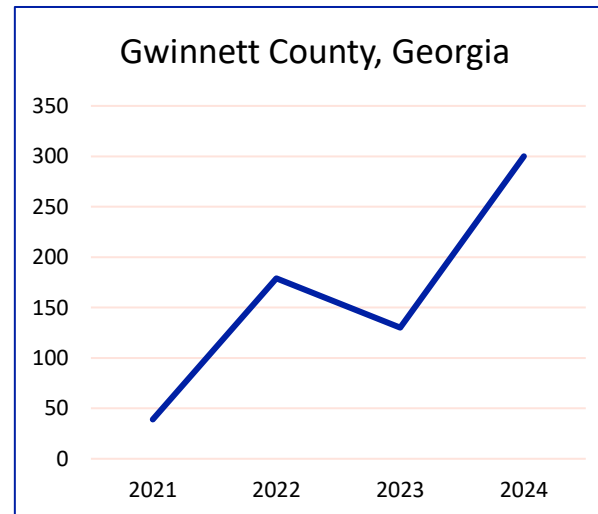
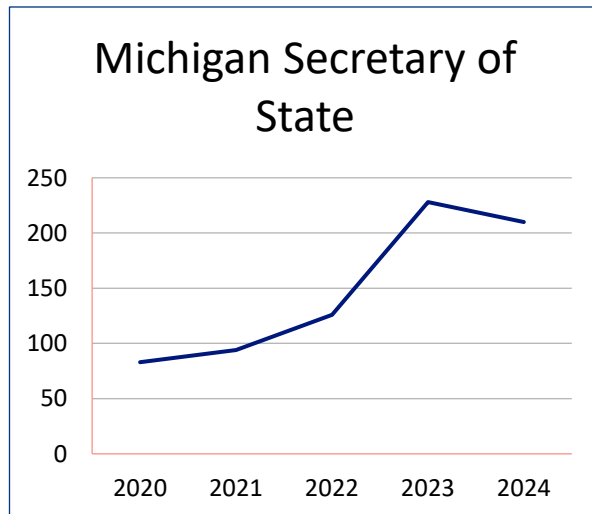
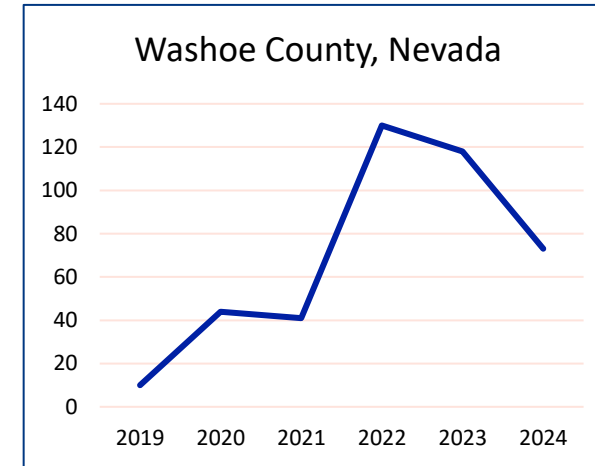
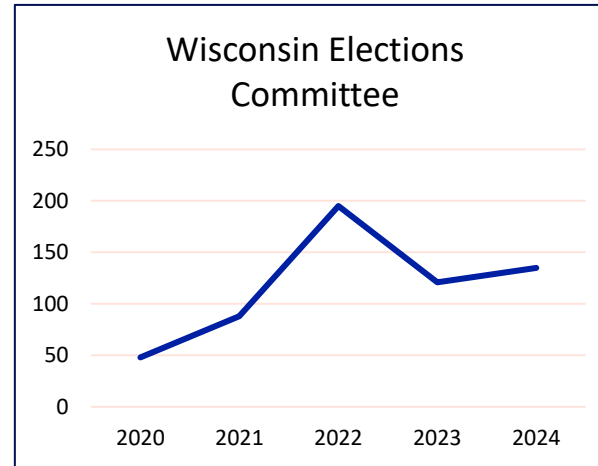
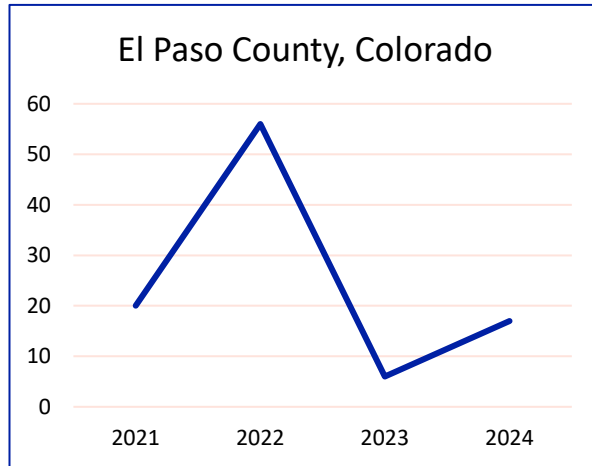
Question:

How do we mitigate disruption to government agencies from unduly burdensome requests while protecting the free flow of civic information?

Current Project

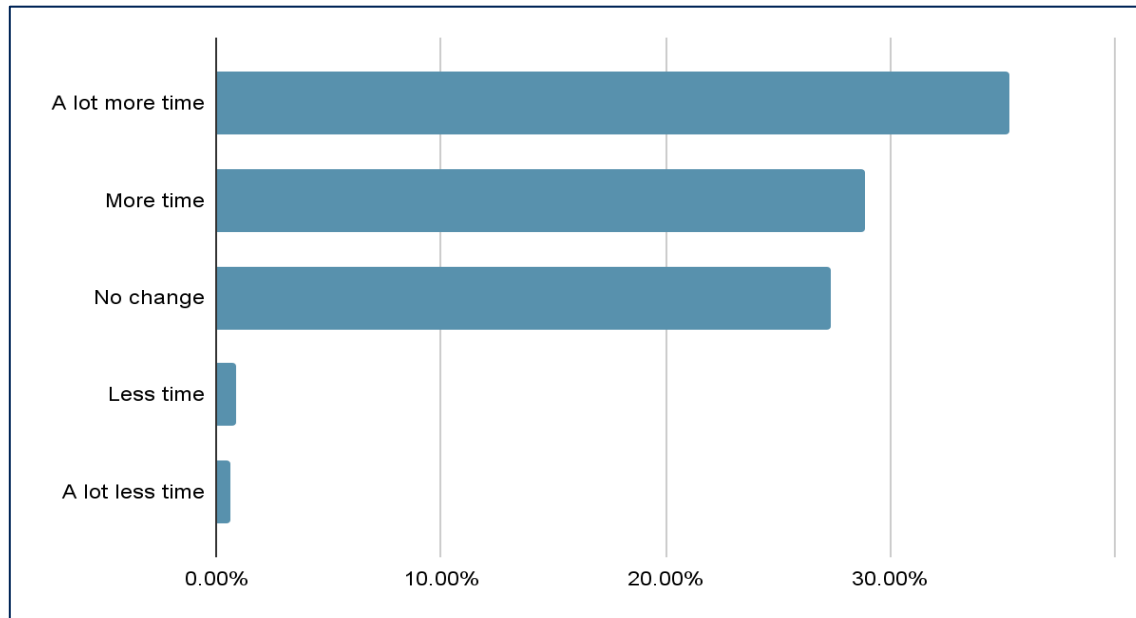
- **Four universities**
 - David Cuillier, University of Florida
 - Suzanne Piotrowski, Rutgers
 - Shelley Kimball, Johns Hopkins
 - Ben Worthy, University of London
- **April 2024 through June 2026**
- **Democracy Fund** support (\$250,000)

1. Record logs



2. Election official survey

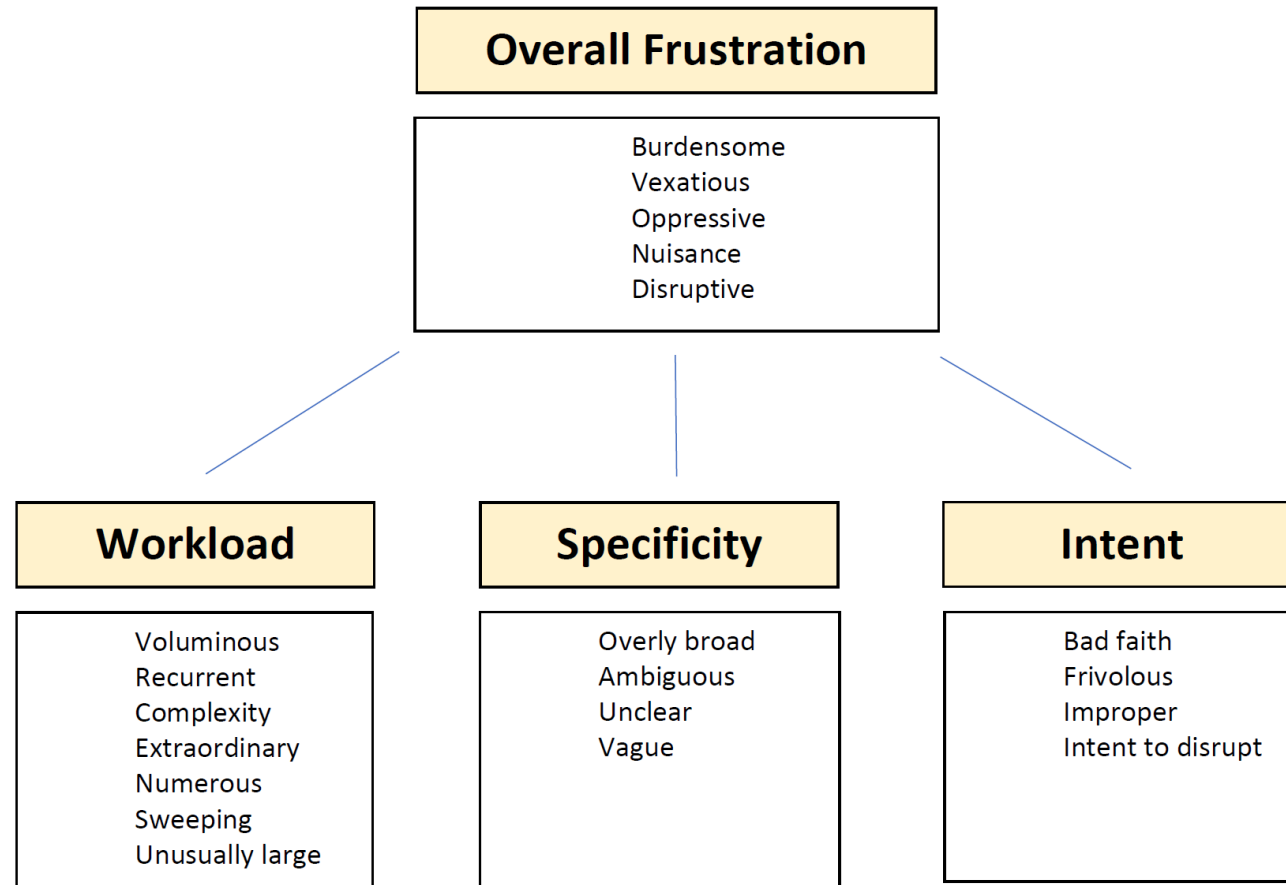
Workload responding to records requests during past four years:



Reed College Elections & Voting Information Center
659 local election officials, summer-fall 2024

Presented January 2025,
Southern Political Science
Association, Puerto Rico

3. Legal inventory



Presented May 15, 2024,
Global Conference on
Transparency Research,
Brussels, Belgium

Current legal remedies

1. **Fees** (all states)
2. **Time extensions** (32 states)
3. **Deny or ignore** (23 states)
4. **Fines and bans** (Connecticut, Utah, Tennessee)



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4. Other materials

- 1. Interviews with 40 experts, requesters, election officials**
- 2. Survey of UK officials, global comparisons**
- 3. Expert advisory panel**

Preliminary solutions

- 1. Independent commission**(e.g., Connecticut)
- 2. Training and education** (for staff and public)
- 3. Two lanes: simple vs. complex**
- 4. Technology/resource assistance**

Less favorable solutions

1. **Fines**
2. **Quotas/caps**
3. **Vague criteria for denials**
4. **Blackout periods**
5. **Time extensions**
6. **Debating fees** (Flat fee? Public interest waivers?)

Report out this fall

Legal inventory



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Local election official survey



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Contact:

David Cuillier, Ph.D.
Brechtner FOI Project
University of Florida
cuillierd@ufl.edu