



**Northern Illinois
University**

Office of General Counsel

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April 7, 2017

Ms. S. Piya Mukherjee
Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601

Re: **2017 PAC 46902**

Dear Mr. Jones:

Northern Illinois University has received your letter regarding the above referenced matter and the associated FOIA requests made by [REDACTED]. This matter has been referred to the University's Office of General Counsel for appropriate review and response. This letter serves as that response.

The Request for Review stems from a FOIA request made by [REDACTED] originally made the following request:

A listing of all emails sent and/or received in the NIU email account of Shyree Sanan for the period of May 1, 2016 to October 31, 2016.

The FOIA office asked [REDACTED] for an extension of time in order to process the request rather than deny the request as unduly burdensome. [REDACTED] did not respond to the University's request for an extension. As you acknowledge, the FOIA office asked [REDACTED] to narrow the scope of her original request to more manageable proportions. [REDACTED] was not willing to narrow the scope of her request. For your information and reference, I have consulted with the FOIA office and they are scheduled to provide [REDACTED] the information she requested by Monday, April 10, 2017.¹ As you will see from the following, though the University would not have been able to provide [REDACTED] with the amount of records she sought within the standard time-frames that FOIA requires without unduly burdening the University.

On February 6, 2017 the FOIA office requested that the Department of Information Technology In to pull this information from the University email system. The response came back with over 12,000 entries.

At the time of [REDACTED] request the FOIA office was processing 20 other FOIA request that

¹ If your office would like details on the production of those records, please let me know and the University can provide those details.

were pending. At the time the University requested an extension of time the FOIA office was still processing 12 ongoing request, including three separate requests from [REDACTED] (a request for email listings of Larry Pinkleton, a request for the email listings of Linda Blair and a copy of each email indicated from the email listing of Nancy Suttentfield and all emails from Nancy Suttentfield to Karen Baker during the period of May 2015 – February 2015)².

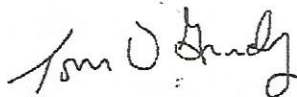
The NIU FOIA Office is primarily staffed by two individuals – Ms. Joan Laurino, with support from Mr. Matt Cabrera. Both Ms. Laurino and Mr. Cabrera have duties and responsibilities to Northern Illinois University that are beyond just the FOIA duties they maintain.

Requiring the NIU FOIA office to review and respond to [REDACTED] request would have impeded the staff's ability to respond to other FOIA requests that were pending, and perform its other duties in a timely fashion. Ms. Laurino primarily serves as Assistant to the Vice President for Marketing and Communications, as well as Chief of Staff for the Division. Secondarily, Ms. Laurino is also Deputy FOIA Officer. Mr. Cabrera was added to the staff of Marketing and Communications to assist with FOIA Compliance, but he is also responsible for assisting Ms. Laurino in the performance of her other duties and supporting the Office of the Vice President of Marketing and Communications.

The University has acted in a reasonable and professional manner in this instance, especially Mr. Cabrera. The University engaged [REDACTED] as required by statute, to try and confer in an attempt to reasonably manage [REDACTED] initial request. It was [REDACTED] who disengaged from the process.

Please let me know how the University can assist further in this matter. If you would like to discuss further, please contact me at 815-753-5454 or togrady1@niu.edu. Thank you.

Sincerely,
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



Thomas M. O'Grady
Assistant General Counsel

² The University properly responded to these separate request by denying the email listing Mr. Larry Pinkleton as unduly burdensome (the University is willing to provide this listing to Ms. May), providing the email listing of Linda Blair and providing the requested emails of Nancy Suttentfield.. The