



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

JB Pritzker, Governor

February 10, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

To: Kirk Allen, Edgar County Watchdogs, Kirk@illinoisleaks.com

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request received January 28, 2026, #2026-0027

Dear Kirk Allen,

On behalf of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department”), I write to respond to your request made pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140 (“FOIA” or the “Act”) for the following information:

“I am requesting the following public records.

1. A copy of the operational expenses of foreign offices for the last 12 months
2. A copy of the last 12 months of Imprest bank Account statements for the following:

Brussels, Belgium -Fortis Bank

Toronto, Canada - Bank of Montreal

Mexico City, Mexico - BBVA México

Tokyo, Japan - SMBC Trust Bank. “

Please be advised for Part 1 of your request, the Department has determined your request is exempt from production. The Department has determined that compliance with your request, as drafted, would place an undue burden on the Department that would substantially outweigh the public interest in the material that you are seeking. *See 5 ILCS 140/2(g).* Your request is overly broad, categorical, and vague. It is not clear which foreign office you are referring to. A categorical request is patently unduly burdensome to the operation of the public body. *Shehadeh v. Madigan*, 2013 IL App (4th) 120742 (4th Dist. 2013).

Please be advised for Part 2 of your request, the Department has determined that bank statements are confidential. 140/7(1) (g) exempts from disclosure “trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person or business where the trade secrets or commercial or financial information are furnished under a claim that they are proprietary, privileged or confidential, and that disclosure of the trade secrets or commercial or financial information would cause competitive harm to the person or business, and only insofar as the claim directly applies to the records requested.” Bank statements are both confidential and commercial.

To the extent you consider this a denial of your request, Section 9(a) of the Act gives a requesting party the right to seek a review of the public body’s response. The review is administered through the Attorney General’s office by the Public Access Counselor (PAC). You, the requestor, have 60 calendar days to submit your request for review to the PAC. The request must be submitted in writing, either by electronic mail, by fax, or by the United States Postal Service and sent to:

Public Access Counselor
Office of the Attorney General
500 South Second Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Email: public.access@ilag.gov
Fax: 217-782-1396

Section 11 of the Act also provides a requesting party, upon denial of a FOIA request by the public body, with the right to file suit for injunctive or declaratory relief in the circuit court of Illinois for either the county where the public body has its principal office or where the person denied access resides.

I hope this is of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Tom Seymour
Legal Counsel
Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity