UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

January 11, 2021

Allan Blustein [Via FOIA Online]
America Rising
1500 Wilson Blvd., 5th Floor
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Re: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request No. EPA-R9-2021-001461

Dear Mr. Blutstein:

Thank you for submitting the above-referenced FOIA request to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which we received on December 16, 2020. You requested the following records:

> *Congressional correspondence received Region 9 from U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto from 2019 to the present.*

An extension of time is necessary for EPA to process your FOIA request pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 2.104(d) due to the scope of your request and the unusual circumstances involved. The response to your request will require a significant amount of EPA's resources and time to: search for and collect the requested records from multiple EPA offices that are separate from the office processing the request; and to search for, and appropriately examine the voluminous amount of records to complete this request.

Furthermore, EPA needs you to clarify your request because it does not specify the which EPA employees you want to include in our document search.

We would like to provide you the opportunity to discuss the request with us and clarify the records that you are seeking so that EPA can process your request. As indicated in 40 C.F.R. §2.102(c), please include or be prepared to discuss any specific information about the records you seek, including time period, authors, or a more detailed description of the records' subject matter.

Given the unusual circumstances described above and the need for you to clarify this request, EPA will need until **March 12, 2021** to process your request. However, the processing clock is stopped for your FOIA request until we receive your clarification or modification. Please respond to this request for clarification or modification within twenty (20) calendar days from the date of this letter. You may contact me at *jawgiel.steven@epa.gov* or at *(415) 972-3876* with your response or any questions. Once the request is clarified we will continue processing your FOIA request unless a written assurance of payment is required. I will provide you with another estimated timeframe for completion if necessary. If we do not receive a response from you within twenty (20) calendar days from the date of this letter, and/or if no additional information is provided, EPA may issue a final determination closing the request.

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Additionally, you may seek assistance from EPA's FOIA Public Liaison at hq.foia@epa.gov or (202) 566-1667, or from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways: by mail, Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, MD 20740-6001; email: ogis@nara.gov; telephone: (202) 741-5770 or (877) 684-6448; or fax: (202) 741-5769..

Sincerely,

Steven L. Jawgiel

Digitally signed by Steven L. Jawgiel
Date: 2021.01.11 13:01:36 -08'00'

Steven L. Jawgiel
Assistant Regional Counsel
Office of Regional Counsel