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## SOCIAL SECURITY

Refer to:  
S9H: AQ9052

May 24, 2017

Mr. John Greenwald, Jr.  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Greenwald:

This letter is in response to your October 11, 2016 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for records regarding the budget our agency spends on advertising on social networks.

Please see enclosed report (1 page) in response to your request.

I am withholding 8 pages of the responsive documents based on FOIA Exemption 5 that protects the deliberative process. FOIA Exemption 5 protects advice, opinions, recommendations, predecisional discussion, and evaluative remarks that are part of the government decision-making process. Release of such predecisional advisory communications would harm the quality of agency decision-making and the policy of encouraging frank, open discussion among agency personnel before making a decision (5 U.S.C. §552(b)(5)).

The general purposes of the deliberative process privilege are to prevent injury to the quality of agency decisions and to protect government agencies' decision-making processes. The deliberative process privilege allows agencies to freely explore alternative avenues of action and to engage in internal debates without fear of public scrutiny (*Missouri ex rel. Shorr v. United States Army Corps of Engineers*, 147 F.3d 708, 710 (8th Cir. 1998)). Exemption 5 protects not merely documents, but also the integrity of the deliberative process itself, where the exposure of that process could result in harm.

If you would like further assistance with your request, you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison by email at [FOIA.Public.Liaison@ssa.gov](mailto:FOIA.Public.Liaison@ssa.gov); by phone at 410-965-1727, by choosing Option 2; or facsimile at 410-966-0869. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS, College Park, MD 20740-6001; email at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at 202-741-5770; toll-free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you disagree with this decision, you may file a written appeal with the Executive Director for the Office of Privacy and Disclosure, Social Security Administration, 617 Altmeyer Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21235. Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted to FOIA.PA.Officers@ssa.gov within 90 days of the date of our response to your initial request. Please mark the envelope or subject line with “Freedom of Information Appeal.”

Sincerely,



Monica Chyn  
Acting Freedom of Information Officer

Enclosure

| <b>Paid Social Media Spend by FY</b> |   |                        |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| <b>Fiscal Year</b>                   | <b>Job Number &amp; Name</b>  | <b>Total</b>           |
| 2013                                 | Facebook, Static, Rich Media, Takeover, Video Ad<br>(Retire Online) | \$ 66,007.26           |
|                                      | <b>2013 Total</b>   | <b>\$ 66,007.26</b>    |
| 2014                                 | Facebook Online Ads   | \$ 194,908.11          |
| 2014                                 | Facebook Digital Ads  | \$ 242,600.09          |
| 2014                                 | Thunderclap (2)   | \$ 1,000.00            |
|                                      | <b>2014 Total</b>   | <b>\$ 438,508.20</b>   |
| 2015                                 | Facebook Online Ads   | \$ 1,042,235.65        |
| 2015                                 | Facebook Paid Media and Oversight                                   | \$ 110,096.40          |
| 2015                                 | Facebook Social Media Advertising                                   | \$ 31,666.65           |
| 2015                                 | Twitter Social Media Advertising                                    | \$ 3,333.33            |
| 2015                                 | Facebook Thunderclap  | \$ 5,000.00            |
| 2015                                 | Twitter Thunderclap   | \$ 4,999.99            |
|                                      | <b>2015 Total</b>   | <b>\$ 1,197,332.02</b> |
| 2016                                 | Thunderclap   | \$ 500.00              |
| 2016                                 | Facebook Paid Media   | \$ 142,890.80          |
| 2016                                 | Twitter Paid Media  | \$ 24,562.21           |
|                                      | <b>2016 Total</b>   | <b>\$ 167,953.01</b>   |
|                                      | <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$ 1,869,800.49</b> |