



May 18, 2021

Michael E. Marshall
Executive Director & Legal Counsel
Iowa Ethics & Campaign Disclosure Board
510 East 12th
Suite 1A
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Mr. Marshall:

This letter is in response to your correspondence of May 14, 2021. We must presume that your request was triggered by the multitude of inaccurate press accounts over the past week concerning Heritage Action's activities related to legislation passed earlier this year by the Iowa legislature to secure the integrity of Iowa's elections. We thank you for this opportunity to set the record straight.

To be clear: Heritage Action staff have had no communications with any members of the Iowa legislature relating to legislation over this past year, moreover, Heritage Action is a national grassroots conservative organization composed of a network of two million individuals across the country and 10,000 members in Iowa who are committed to engaging on policy issues of critical importance. We are organized as a tax-exempt Section 501(c)(4) social welfare organization not operated for profit. In early 2021, thousands of our grassroots supporters across Iowa received materials from Heritage Action educating them about the proposed law strengthening the integrity of Iowa's elections. Many of these grassroots volunteers who supported these common-sense reforms subsequently engaged with their legislators as citizen advocates exercising their core First Amendment right to advocate for their policy views before the Iowa Legislature.¹

This commendable grassroots activity was part of a campaign that Heritage Action privately announced in February and publicly announced in March to activate our grassroots network to advocate for legislation that would secure and strengthen state election systems in eight states, including Iowa. In jurisdictions where required, Heritage Action (or paid lobbyists acting on its behalf) has registered to lobby. As you know, Iowa only regulates those who are compensated to engage in direct lobbying, and advocacy by volunteer grassroots advocates does not trigger registration under Iowa law. While no Heritage Action employee or a representative paid to act on its behalf engaged directly with the Iowa Legislature, we are proud to know that our

¹ See Press Release, Heritage Action, *Heritage Action Praises Iowa Election Integrity Bill*, Mar. 8, 2021, <https://heritageaction.com/press/heritage-action-praises-iowa-election-integrity-bill>; Press Release, Heritage Action, *Heritage Action Launches Election Integrity Campaign, Commits Over \$10 Million*, Mar. 8, 2021, <https://heritageaction.com/press/heritage-action-launches-election-integrity-campaign-commits-over-10-million>.

grassroots network answered the call to express their views on this topic of public importance, and that their efforts helped shape legislation that is now law.

The only communications that Heritage Action staff had with any state agency this past year were: (i) a telephone call in March 2021 with Governor Reynolds's communications staff to discuss Heritage Action's communications strategy to highlight the provisions of the new election integrity law once enacted (along with email correspondence between the staff members arranging this call's logistics); and (ii) emails in April 2021 with Governor Reynolds's staff asking whether the Governor would be willing to complete a short video concerning her work in connection with Iowa's election integrity law.

We appreciate the opportunity to share these details regarding our grassroots advocacy in Iowa and trust that this information resolves your inquiry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher Byrnes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Christopher Byrnes