

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 721

To require the disclosure of certain visitor access records.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 23, 2017

Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. CARPER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To require the disclosure of certain visitor access records.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Making Access Records
5 Available to Lead American Government Openness Act”
6 or the “MAR-A-LAGO Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

9 (1) Beginning in 2009, the Obama administra-
10 tion instituted a policy to release the visitor access
11 records for the White House complex.

1 (2) This policy was responsible for making pub-
2 lic the names of nearly 6,000,000 visitors to the
3 White House in the 8 years of the Obama adminis-
4 tration.

5 (3) This policy provided the people of the
6 United States with insight into who influences the
7 White House and transparency regarding efforts by
8 lobbyists to effect policies, legislation, and Presi-
9 dential actions.

10 (4) To date, the Trump administration has not
11 indicated whether it will continue the policy of pub-
12 licly releasing White House visitor access records.

13 (5) Since taking office on January 20, 2017,
14 President Trump has conducted official business not
15 only in the White House, but also at several of his
16 privately owned clubs and resorts.

17 (6) President Trump’s Mar-a-Lago Club in
18 Palm Beach, Florida, has been dubbed the “Winter
19 White House” and the “Southern White House”.

20 (7) President Trump has spent 5 of his first 9
21 weekends in office at Mar-a-Lago.

22 (8) Mar-a-Lago is a private membership facility
23 open to members, their guests, and others who have
24 been invited as guests for special events.

1 (9) Visitors to Mar-a-Lago do not undergo the
2 same background checks as White House visitors
3 and visitor access records to the club have not been
4 released to the public.

5 (10) The President has conducted official busi-
6 ness and hosted international leaders at Mar-a-Lago.

7 (11) Media reports have shown President
8 Trump and members of his Cabinet at Mar-a-Lago
9 and nearby Trump International Golf Club inter-
10 acting with members and guests, providing access
11 unavailable to the general public.

12 (12) President Trump owns many other prop-
13 erties that offer similar amenities and membership-
14 only access where he is likely to conduct official
15 business during his term in office.

16 (13) On March 11, 2017, President Trump
17 hosted several members of his Cabinet at his Trump
18 National Golf Club in Potomac Falls, Virginia, to
19 discuss homeland security, health care, and the
20 economy according to media reports.

21 (14) Media reports have indicated that the
22 President may use his Bedminster, New Jersey, re-
23 sort as a “Summer White House”.

24 (15) The people of the United States expect
25 and deserve transparency in government. The policy

1 to release visitor access records instituted by the
 2 previous administration appropriately balanced
 3 transparency with the need for confidentiality in
 4 government actions.

5 (16) To the extent Mar-a-Lago and any other
 6 private facilities become locations where the Presi-
 7 dent conducts business and interacts with individ-
 8 uals who are not government officials, the same dis-
 9 closures should apply.

10 **SEC. 3. IMPROVING ACCESS TO INFLUENTIAL VISITOR AC-**
 11 **CESS RECORDS.**

12 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 (1) COVERED LOCATION.—The term “covered
 14 location” means—

15 (A) the White House;

16 (B) the residence of the Vice President;

17 and

18 (C) any other location at which the Presi-
 19 dent or the Vice President regularly conducts
 20 official business.

21 (2) COVERED RECORDS.—The term “covered
 22 records” means information relating to a visit at a
 23 covered location, which shall include—

24 (A) the name of each visitor at the covered
 25 location;

1 (B) the name of each individual with whom
2 each visitor described in subparagraph (A) met
3 at the covered location; and

4 (C) the purpose of the visit.

5 (b) REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in sub-
6 section (c), not later than 30 days after the date of enact-
7 ment of this Act, the President shall establish, and update
8 every 90 days, a publicly available database that contains
9 covered records for the preceding 90-day period.

10 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall not in-
12 clude in the database established under subsection

13 (b) any covered record—

14 (A) the posting of which would implicate
15 personal privacy or law enforcement concerns or
16 threaten national security; or

17 (B) relating to a purely personal guest at
18 a covered location.

19 (2) SENSITIVE MEETINGS.—With respect to a
20 particularly sensitive meeting at a covered location,
21 the President shall—

22 (A) include the number of visitors at the
23 covered location in the database established
24 under subsection (b); and

1 (B) post the applicable covered records in
2 the database established under subsection (b)
3 when the President determines that release of
4 the covered records is no longer sensitive.

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