<div align="center">

Senate Judiciary Committee
Questions for the Record
Hearing on
The Freedom of Information Act: Perspectives from Public Requesters
April 8, 2025
Senator Amy Klobuchar

</div>

<u>For Professor Daniel Z. Epstein</u>: In your testimony, you suggested that FOIA could be modernized by allowing requesters to search for specific keywords with a set of relevant documents, and that "technology-enabled access to information…can reduce backlogs and litigation costs."

- How can Congress best take advantage of advances in modern technology as we work to modernize FOIA?

First, Congress can centralize FOIA portals by using FOIA.gov as the system of record for any and all FOIA requests received by the government.

Second, all agencies must post digital libraries of released records, with documents in machine-readable formats. Modern search engines and cloud storage make it feasible to host large collections of disclosures for public browsing. By leveraging AI-driven search algorithms, agencies could direct users to already-released documents relevant to their inquiry. AI is also a basis for how the government searches for responsive records within its agencies. Those search terms would themselves be subject to FOIA, allowing the public to ensure agency thoroughness and fairness when conducting searches.

Third, agencies can use data analytics to identify the most requested records or topics and then systematically review and release those records without waiting for requests.

Fourth, to produce records, agencies must properly preserve records. Machine learning can auto-classify and tag records at creation (i.e., deliberative process or national security), making later retrieval easier. Cloud-based records repositories with robust search capabilities mean FOIA staff can locate information much faster.