



PROTECT the PUBLIC'S TRUST

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Protect the Public's Trust
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Watchdog Demands Information on High-Level Officials' Use of Apps That Can Hide Communications from Public View

*Using Encrypted Apps to Avoid Laws Like FOIA Would Make Ethics
Obligations More Difficult to Enforce*

Today, Protect the Public's Trust demanded records from multiple federal agencies regarding high-level officials' uses of encrypted messaging applications, which can hide communications from the press and public. The American public deserves to know whether officials are using these applications to communicate, if they are using them to discuss official business and, if so, the content of those communications.

The use of communications platforms that are able to cloak conversations raises concerns regarding transparency, accountability, and compliance with ethics responsibilities. Even if officials are using these platforms for purely personal communications, their use creates the perception in the eyes of the public that these officials may not be conducting their public service out in the open and free of potential conflict or bias.

“Public records and public information laws exist for a reason,” declared Michael Chamberlain, Director of Protect the Public's Trust. “The American public rightly demands the work of their government be performed in the light of day. High-level officials communicating on platforms that can hide their activities from public view further degrades the public's trust in their government, which is already at an all-time low.”

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Protect the Public's Trust is a non-profit organization that educates the public about potential misconduct to ensure the integrity of public office and that all public servants observe established rules, regulations, and ethical guidelines.

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