

1 JEFFREY BOSSERT CLARK  
 Acting Assistant Attorney General  
 2 JOHN V. COGHLAN  
 Deputy Assistant Attorney General  
 3 AUGUST E. FLENTJE  
 Special Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General  
 4 ALEXANDER K. HAAS  
 Branch Director  
 5 DIANE KELLEHER  
 BRAD P. ROSENBERG  
 6 Assistant Branch Directors  
 ELLIOTT M. DAVIS  
 7 STEPHEN EHRLICH  
 JOHN J. ROBINSON  
 8 ALEXANDER V. SVERDLOV  
 M. ANDREW ZEE  
 9 Trial Attorneys  
 U.S. Department of Justice  
 10 Civil Division, Federal Programs Branch  
 1100 L Street, NW  
 11 Washington, D.C. 20005  
 Telephone: (202) 514-3374

12 *Attorneys for Defendants*

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 15 **IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
 16 **FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**  
 17 **SAN JOSE DIVISION**

18 NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, *et al.*,

19 Plaintiff,

20 v.

21 WILBUR L. ROSS, JR., *et al.*,

22 Defendants.  
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 24  
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 26  
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Case No. 5:20-cv-05799-LHK

**DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR RELIEF  
 FROM NONDISPOSITIVE PRETRIAL  
 ORDER OF MAGISTRATE JUDGES (ECF  
 407)**

1 In accordance with Federal Rule 72(a) and ECF No. 383, Defendants hereby object to, and  
2 ask this Court to set aside, one aspect of the December 24, 2020 Order by the Magistrate Judges  
3 to the extent the Order requires production of documents the Department of Commerce has  
4 concluded are not responsive to Plaintiffs' document requests. *See* ECF No. 407 Order After In  
5 Camera Review of Disputed Documents Identified in Government's December 21 Privilege Log  
6 (hereinafter "MJ Privilege Order"). Specifically, a portion of the MJ Privilege Order requires  
7 Defendants to "produce the 2,944 documents that declarant Brian DiGiacomo identified on  
8 December 12 as 'likely subject to Executive privilege' ECF 376-2 ¶ 12, unless they were identified  
9 on the December 21 log and the privilege was not overruled in this order." ECF 407 at 7. As  
10 detailed in the attached Declaration of Brian DiGiacomo, the Department of Commerce  
11 determined that a large number of these documents are not responsive to Plaintiffs' requests for  
12 production. Defendants ask the Court to set aside the MJ Privilege Order's requirement that they  
13 produce documents the Department of Commerce has concluded are not responsive to Plaintiffs'  
14 discovery demands.<sup>1</sup>

### 15 BACKGROUND

16 As stated in the December 12, 2020 DiGiacomo Declaration, given the time constraints  
17 necessary to meet the Court's December 10, 2020 order requiring production by December 14 of  
18 four categories of documents, the Department of Commerce identified potentially responsive  
19 documents, including the 2,944 documents referenced in paragraph 12 of his declaration, solely  
20 by applying search terms to the documents it collected from the specified custodians. *See* ECF  
21 376-2 at ¶ 6 ("On December 11, DOC therefore applied search terms from sixteen searches  
22 proposed by Plaintiffs and two searches proposed by Defendants to ensure that all necessary  
23 documents are available for compliance. This results in a total of about 88,765 documents."); *id.*

24  
25 <sup>1</sup> Under Local Rule 72-2, Defendants do not understand that they are required to seek a stay of  
26 the MJ Privilege Order in order to file this objection and have it be adjudicated by the Court. To  
27 the extent this understanding is incorrect, Defendants ask the Court to issue a stay so they do not  
28 unintentionally violate the order. And, to the extent this objection is overruled, Defendants  
respectfully ask the Court to stay any adverse ruling for 48 hours to provide the Acting  
Solicitor General an opportunity to consider whether to seek emergency appellate relief.  
Defendants are otherwise prepared to promptly produce these documents.

1 ¶ 7 (“Using search terms, DOC has determined that within that approximately 88,765 documents,  
2 there are about 25,512 documents that are likely to contain material protected by the attorney-  
3 client, attorney-work-product, and Executive privileges.”); *id.* ¶ 12 (“Finally, a significant number  
4 of documents—as many as 2,944—are likely subject to Executive privilege. These documents  
5 potentially include communications between federal agency personnel and presidential advisers or  
6 members of their staff in the Office of the President”).

7 As explained in the motion for reconsideration accompanying the December 12, 2020  
8 DiGiacomo declaration, Defendants understood the set of 88,765 documents (and the subset of  
9 2,944 documents) to be overbroad and likely to include non-responsive documents, but—to ensure  
10 “full compliance” with the Court’s December 10 Order and without sufficient time to conduct a  
11 manual review—Defendants needed to treat all of the documents collected at that point as  
12 “presumptively responsive.” *See* ECF 376 at 2 (“In order to ensure full compliance with this  
13 Court’s Order, Defendants would therefore need to treat all of the documents they have collected  
14 as presumptively responsive, in order to ensure that they do not omit any documents that would  
15 actually be responsive from their production.”).

16 This Court subsequently clarified its Order and permitted Defendants to produce  
17 documents through December 21. ECF No. 380 at 10. With this extra time, the Department of  
18 Commerce undertook a prioritized review of documents among those previously identified as  
19 potentially implicating core privileges—including the 2,944 documents highlighted as potentially  
20 subject to Executive privilege—for responsiveness and, if found responsive, for privilege. After  
21 having conducted some of this review, Defendants advised Plaintiffs and the Court that they did  
22 not expect the December 21 privilege log to identify the same quantity of documents initially  
23 identified as potentially privileged. *See* ECF No. 398 at 4 (“Defendants do not believe that their  
24 December 21 privilege log will contain anything close to the 25,512 documents referenced by Mr.  
25 DiGiacomo as likely to contain privileged material. Rather, as explained below, after removing  
26 non-responsive documents, producing non-privileged documents, and scoping out from review  
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1 core attorney-client litigation communications and attorney work product, Defendants estimate  
2 that only a fraction of the 25,512 documents will appear on the December 21 log.”).

3 In short, while the 2,944 documents were by December 12 identified using targeted search  
4 terms, the Department of Commerce had not—at the time Mr. DiGiacomo signed his declaration—  
5 engaged in the kind of review of those documents that would have been necessary to reach a final  
6 conclusion that these (or other) documents yielded by the search terms were actually responsive  
7 to Plaintiffs’ discovery requests.

### 8 ARGUMENT

9 As described in the attached declaration, between December 12, when Mr. DiGiacomo  
10 signed his declaration, and the date of the MJ Privilege Order, the Department of Commerce  
11 completed its review of these 2,944 documents and concluded that only a portion of the documents  
12 were actually responsive. Documents that the Department of Commerce deemed responsive and  
13 over which privilege has been claimed were logged with Defendants’ December 21 privilege log.  
14 *See* Declaration of Brian DiGiacomo, ¶¶ 13, dated December 26, 2020, attached hereto. In  
15 addition, the attached declaration describes the nature of the Department of Commerce’s review  
16 of the 2,944 documents and the manner by which the Department of Commerce made its  
17 responsiveness determinations. *Id.* ¶¶ 6-12. This Declaration explains the Department of  
18 Commerce’s review process; explains how the Department of Commerce applied that process to  
19 this subset of 2,944 documents; and notes that, upon actual review, the Department of Commerce  
20 determined that slightly less than 2,500 of the 2,944 documents are, in fact, not responsive to  
21 Plaintiffs’ requests for production. *Id.* ¶¶ 2-12. Because the Department of Commerce determined  
22 these documents to be non-responsive, they were neither produced to Plaintiffs nor listed on a  
23 privilege log. *Id.* ¶ 12.

24 Defendants do not understand Plaintiffs to be seeking non-responsive documents. In fact,  
25 Plaintiffs have complained of “wholly irrelevant or junk email materials” contained in Defendants’  
26 productions. *See* ECF No. 402 at 9. In their Objections to Defendants’ Privilege Log, Plaintiffs  
27 expressed their concern that Defendants had failed to include responsive documents from the set  
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1 DATED: December 26, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

2 JEFFREY BOSSERT CLARK  
3 Acting Assistant Attorney General

4 JOHN V. COGHLAN  
5 Deputy Assistant Attorney General

6 AUGUST E. FLENTJE  
7 Special Counsel to the Assistant Attorney  
8 General

9 ALEXANDER K. HAAS  
Branch Director

10 /s/ Brad P. Rosenberg  
11 DIANE KELLEHER  
12 BRAD P. ROSENBERG  
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16 JOHN J. ROBINSON  
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19 Trial Attorneys  
20 U.S. Department of Justice  
21 Civil Division, Federal Programs Branch  
22 1100 L Street, NW  
23 Washington, D.C. 20005  
24 Telephone: (202) 514-3374

25 *Attorneys for Defendants*