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**SPPI FILES LAWSUIT TO EXPOSE POTENTIAL MISCONDUCT IN ALBUQUERQUE'S PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST PROCESS**

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM**—The Southwest Public Policy Institute (SPPI) has [filed a lawsuit](#) against the City of Albuquerque and City Clerk Ethan Watson for failing to comply with the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA). [SPPI's lawsuit](#) centers on the City's refusal to provide access to a public records database that tracks all public records requests submitted to the City. This lawsuit raises serious concerns about transparency and accountability within Albuquerque's government.

**"This lawsuit is crucial because it addresses potential misconduct in how the City handles public records requests,"** said Patrick M. Brenner, President of the Institute. **"We believe there is evidence that certain requests or requesters are being unfairly targeted for unreasonable or malicious delay or denial. By denying access to the public records database, Ethan Watson and Mayor Tim Keller effectively blocked our efforts to investigate these concerns and undermined the public's right to know."**

SPPI initially requested access to the [CivicPlus NextRequest](#) database in December 2022 to examine how city officials process public records requests and whether they are complying with IPRA. However, Watson and others have repeatedly refused to provide the database, citing vague reasons such as the request being "excessively burdensome" or claiming they cannot locate the records. Despite these excuses, the City has not provided any valid legal basis for withholding the information.

Brenner continued, **"Attorney General Raúl Torrez has provided clear instruction on how municipalities like Albuquerque are required to handle requests for databases. Albuquerque's refusal to comply is irrefutable."**

This chapter is only a small part of an [emerging pattern](#) of [non-compliance](#) with transparency laws by Mayor Keller and the City of Albuquerque, underscoring the urgent need for a [dedicated watchdog](#) to protect the public's right to know.

Brenner added, **"It is ironic that the very records showing how the City handles public records requests are being hidden from public view. The public has a right to understand how their government operates, and SPPI is committed to upholding that right."**

SPPI is now seeking a court order to compel the City to release the records and to hold City officials accountable for their lack of transparency. The Institute is also requesting damages and attorney's fees.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Liam Gray at 804-217-2917 or [press@southwestpolicy.com](mailto:press@southwestpolicy.com).

**About Southwest Public Policy Institute:**

The [Southwest Public Policy Institute](#) is a nonprofit research institute and think tank in the American Southwest dedicated to promoting **better living through better policy**.

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