

J Patrick Brown / SPEAK PRIORITELY IN SUPPORT
I am here Represent. / Public Order #13

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My organization, MuckRock, helps facilitate public records requests on a federal, state, and local level. We are currently the largest independent archive of public documents in the United States, and file thousands of such requests per year.

As such, it is with deep regret that I inform you, that in my personal experience, and the experience of a multitude of our users, the state of public records in Massachusetts is amongst the worst in the country. Antiquated systems, overzealous redactions, and prohibitive costs are the norm, and transparency gets a great deal of lip-service, but little legal backing.

Policy Order #13 would place Cambridge on the forefront of long-overdue reform to a system badly in need of it. By adopting a system that would encourage, rather than punish, citizens for active participation in their community, Cambridge would again demonstrate that they are the progressive leaders of the state, and through that, the rest of that nation.

Cambridge City Councilors, thank you for your time and allowing me to comment.

We would like to offer our support & expertise in the implementation of these policy, and strongly