

KOREY WELLS

Springville, California

September 8, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Taha Saleh
Porterville, California

RE: REJECTION OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2026 CEASE-AND-DESIST DEMAND; NOTICE TO PRESERVE EVIDENCE

Mr. Saleh:

Your demand is rejected in full. I will not remove, retract, withdraw, or stop publishing lawful political commentary because you sent a threat letter. Your demand is a transparent attempt by a candidate for public office to bully a critic, suppress scrutiny, and dictate what Porterville voters are permitted to hear. It will not work.

You do not get to rewrite the evidence, impose a self-serving definition of the word "runs," or convert your selective denial into a command. A threat is not proof. Your denial does not erase the documented sequence. Your self-imposed deadline is not a court order, subpoena, or judgment, and it creates no obligation for me to comply.

1. YOUR DEMAND MISSTATES THE PUBLICATION

Your letter pretends the only relevant question is whether your personal Facebook account appears on a exported list of pages your profile has administered. That is not the claim, and it is not the issue. The phrase "he runs it with others as a coordinated plan to influence an election" appears alongside the facts supporting that conclusion and alongside an express statement that the available records do not, by themselves, identify who physically pressed "publish" or conclusively identify every person controlling the page.

In that context, "runs" is an ordinary political characterization of participation, coordination, content supply, direction, proxy activity, and campaign strategy. It is not confined to the technical question of whose account appears in a Meta role list. I stand by the challenged characterization as a conclusion drawn from the facts disclosed to readers, who are free to review the source materials and decide for themselves.

Your narrow denial is evasive. Your letter does not deny that you supplied the records to Porterville First, communicated with its administrators or contributors, coordinated the timing or substance of its posts, participated in its political strategy, or benefited from its attacks on your opponent and his supporters. You chose to deny only a cramped definition of "run" and then demanded silence on everything else.

2. THE DOCUMENTED SEQUENCE REMAINS UNANSWERED

The published conclusion rests on a disclosed and verifiable chronology:

1. On March 19, 2026, you requested City campaign-finance records and specifically asked that Greg Meister's records be prioritized if time became an issue.
2. On March 22, 2026, the anonymous Porterville First page appeared, three days after your request.

3. On March 24 at 1:50 p.m., the City Clerk's Office sent you the requested records. At 8:18 p.m., you replied, "This is perfect, thank you so much!"
4. At approximately 9:21 p.m. - about one hour after your reply - Porterville First published material from Meister's campaign statement. The material was posted again the following day.
5. In response to a later request for all requests for FPPC records made during the specified two-month period, the City Clerk stated that there had been only one such request and produced yours.
6. You have remained active in the page's public discussion while the page has promoted you and attacked your political opponent, his supporters, and others who challenge its claims.

That sequence is the problem you refuse to answer. Records you requested and praised appeared on a newly created anonymous political page about an hour later. Your letter offers no explanation for that timing. It supplies no sworn denial of coordination. It identifies no independent source. It does not identify the people actually operating the page. It simply demands that I stop drawing the obvious political inference from the evidence.

The Meta report you provided is titled "Your Pages - Pages you are the admin of." It indicates that it was generated on September 4, 2026, contains data from September 3, 2025 to September 3, 2026, and lists Shop N Save Market and Henderson Avenue Chevron. It does not list Porterville First. I do not dispute what that report you submitted to me says. But the report answers only a narrow account-administration question. It does not establish that you never supplied records or content to Porterville First, communicated or coordinated with its operators, participated in its strategy, or otherwise helped direct the political effort. Your report therefore does not answer the coordination evidence your letter avoids.

3. THIS IS CORE PROTECTED POLITICAL SPEECH

You are seeking public office. Speech and commentary concerning a candidate's political conduct, alliances, campaign methods, judgment, and fitness for office occupies the core of the First Amendment. You may dispute my conclusion, but you do not get to suppress it merely because it is harsh, politically damaging, or inconsistent with the image you want to present to voters. Ironically, the turbulent Facebook page often claims the same yet no frivolous cease-and-desist has been served upon them by its political victims.

Unlike the Facebook page, the site does not ask readers to accept an unsupported accusation. It publishes the chronology, links the underlying records, identifies the timing, states what the records do and do not establish, and then presents the conclusion drawn from that evidence. Readers are free to inspect the same materials and accept or reject that conclusion. Your letter quotes the conclusion while attempting to sever it from the evidence and limitation language that accompany it.

If you file suit over this protected free speech, I am prepared to invoke California's anti-SLAPP statute. That statute exists to dispose of claims aimed at chilling speech on matters of public significance. A prevailing defendant is entitled to attorney's fees and costs. I will seek every remedy available, including recovery of any expenses you force me to incur.

4. RECIPROCAL NOTICE TO PRESERVE EVIDENCE

Your preservation paragraph is noted. I have no intention of destroying relevant evidence. The obligation runs both ways. You are now formally directed to preserve all documents, electronically stored information, account data, metadata, drafts, deleted material, backups, and communications concerning Porterville First, TahaGate.com, Greg Meister, the City records request, the challenged publication, and your demand, including:

- Complete Meta/Facebook account-data exports for the relevant period, including historical page roles, role changes, page access, linked accounts, business portfolios, devices, login records, and account activity;
- All communications with any person who owned, administered, contributed to, supplied content to, posted for, advised, funded, or coordinated with Porterville First;
- All messages, emails, direct messages, disappearing-message content, drafts, shared files, screenshots, and cloud or device backups concerning the March 2026 records request and the subsequent publication of those records;
- All campaign, Chamber of Commerce, and third-party communications concerning anonymous pages, social-media strategy, content approval, opposition research, Greg Meister, Ed McKerverey, Porterville First, TahaGate.com, or any submission to the Porterville Recorder; and
- All documents supporting the representations in your September 6 demand, including the report titled "Your Pages," its underlying or related Meta data, and records reflecting page-role history or role changes during the relevant period.

Immediately suspend auto-delete settings, disappearing messages, routine deletion, device replacement, account deactivation, and any other process that could alter or destroy relevant information. Destruction or alteration after receipt of this notice will be addressed as appropriate in any litigation you choose to initiate.

5. FINAL POSITION

There will be no retraction. There will be no removal. There will be no withdrawal based on your demand. To the extent any submission to a publication exists, I will not retract or alter it merely because you demanded that I do so. I will continue to report, comment, and publish additional evidence as it develops.

Public scrutiny is the price of asking voters for public power. Criticism is not defamation. A selective denial is not exoneration. If you want to answer the evidence, answer it. Explain how records you requested and praised appeared on Porterville First about an hour later. Identify the actual operators. Produce the complete records. Stop hiding behind a technical distinction that does nothing to resolve the documented coordination.

If you choose litigation, be prepared to prove every element of your claim, the constitutionally required level of fault, and confront the disclosed supporting record. Be prepared as well for an anti-SLAPP motion, a request for fees and costs, and lawful discovery into the coordination your letter conspicuously avoids. Do not mistake a legal threat for leverage. I will not be bullied into silence.

Govern yourself accordingly.

Sincerely,

Korey Wells

All rights, claims, defenses, privileges, and remedies are expressly reserved. Nothing in this letter is a complete statement of the evidence or applicable law.