



# AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

GROVER G. NORQUIST

PRESIDENT

March 13, 2007

Dear Governor,

**I write to share with you an updated memorandum on state efforts to bring transparency into government spending.** Several states are currently working to pass legislation that would increase transparency and would require the creation and maintenance of a website on which taxpayers could track government expenditures in a clear and easy way.

**This effort to shine a light on government spending is an important movement for the American taxpayer, with the potential of bringing about substantial savings.** In a number of states, some information on government expenditures is already open to public access. However, it is often very hard for the average citizen to locate, and, in many cases, difficult to understand. Streamlining the available information, adding in additional information and combining this information in one easily accessible website would greatly benefit the system.

**Opacity in the budget process often leaves taxpayers frustrated, and can create the perception of possible abuse of the system.** More public scrutiny will help eliminate impropriety in dealing with taxpayer dollars – be it perceived or real impropriety.

**If your office and your state legislature are not already focused on this issue, I urge you to consider embracing it.** Taxpayers would benefit greatly from being able to access state expenditures and contracts, ranging from purchases and services to grants and labor contracts, on the Internet in a clear and searchable format. Ultimately, they are the ones footing the bill, so they should be allowed to track how their money is being spent.

I would encourage you to not only work to require state agencies to disclose their expenditures and contracts, but to also extend this requirement to all subdivisions of government, including school districts, counties, cities, and special districts. Government labor contracts should also be made publicly accessible, so that taxpayers get full disclosure as to how their hard-earned tax dollars are spent.

**Understanding that accountability is one of the cornerstones of representative democracy, Americans for Tax Reform is supporting these efforts and we are highlighting them whenever and wherever possible.** If your office or the legislature in your state is working to shed light on government spending, and we have missed these efforts in the attached memo, please let us know and we will cheerfully highlight them.

Onward,

Grover Norquist