



AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

GROVER G. NORQUIST

PRESIDENT

February 8, 2007

Dear Governor,

I write to urge you to follow the lead of Governor Rick Perry of Texas and Governor Mitch Daniels of Indiana, both of whom who have taken big strides at bringing transparency into government spending.

One of the first executive orders Governor Daniels signed in 2005, was a directive to the Department of Administration to log written state contracts on the Internet (E 05-07, enclosed). Today, Hoosiers are able to access on the Internet the total number of state contracts entered into each year, the total amount of dollars awarded under state contracts each year, and the number and percentage of Indiana businesses and out-of-state businesses to whom state contracts are awarded each year.

Governor Perry made spending transparency reform one of the key planks of his budget reform plan unveiled at the end of January of 2007. His proposal includes requiring all state agencies to publish expenditures online in a clear and consistent format. To set a good example, the governor's office has already made all expenditures made by them available to view online.

Accountability is one of the cornerstones of representative democracy. A recent poll conducted by the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs found that 72 % of Oklahomans would favor the creation of a website that tracks government spending.

Thus I urge you to work to make all your written state expenditures and contracts, ranging from purchases and services to grants and labor contracts, available to the public on the Internet in a clear and searchable format. I would encourage you to not only 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.

In the words of Governor Perry: *"Transparency is the cornerstone of public trust. If taxpayers are picking up the bill, they ought to be able to look at the receipt."*

Attached is a memo listing current efforts to bring transparency to the states. Please note that this is a work in progress, and we will add more information as we receive it. We will send out updates on the status of state efforts to shed light on government spending and look forward to highlighting your efforts to this effect.

Onward,

Grover Norquist