



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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Transparency on the March in Tennessee

*SB 1066, the "Taxpayer Transparency Act of 2007" moves out of
senate state and local government committee*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A bill that would shed a light on government spending cleared its first hurdle in the Tennessee Senate on Tuesday, March 20th. SB 1066, sponsored by Senator Jim Tracy (R-Shelbyville) would enact the Taxpayer Transparency Act of 2007, and would mandate the creation of a website which would detail information on government expenditures.

Under the bill, the website would among other things include information on grants, contracts, subcontracts, and purchase orders for fiscal year 2006-2007 no later than January 1, 2008, and for the following fiscal years by September 30th each year. Among the information to be disclosed are name, amount, transaction type, the department, agency, office or entity of state government making the expenditure, the budget program source for the expense, and the purpose of the expenditure. The threshold for disclosure is set at any appropriated or nonappropriated funds in excess of \$5,000.

"Senator Tracy's Taxpayer Transparency Act is an important step in the right direction," said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **"Taxpayers will be given an important tool to understand where their hard-earned tax dollars go, and ultimately, this will help combat fraud, waste and abuse."**

In a number of states, similar measures to the Taxpayer Transparency Act have been introduced. For more information on state efforts to bring transparency into the budget process, please visit www.atr.org.

"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. State legislators understand that, and they're moving in the right direction with these bills," continued Norquist. **"From a taxpayer's perspective, the ideal situation would be disclosure of all relevant information on government expenditures without a dollar threshold while linking to the text of the actual contracts. Open government is good government. Senator Tracy's legislation would bring taxpayers one huge step closer towards that goal. I hope his fellow senators in the finance, ways and means committee will help move the bill along."**

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jkartch@atr.org.

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