



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: John Kartch
Sandra Fabry
202-785-0266

24 MAY 2007

Transparency Trail Blazer Sweeps Through Texas

Senate joins house in passing comprehensive spending transparency legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Wednesday, May 23, taxpayers scored a victory when the state senate joined the house in passing HB 3430, a bill that will empower taxpayers to track government expenditures at a mouse-click. The bill, which had previously passed the house unanimously, passed the senate without a single vote in opposition. Governor Rick Perry embraced the idea of making government expenditures available online early this year and made it a core plank of his budgetary reform agenda.

HB 3430 mandates the creation of a searchable database for state expenditures including grants and contracts. Taxpayers would be able to access, search, aggregate and download all relevant information free of charge. In addition, each state agency that maintains a generally accessible Internet site, shall include a link on the agency's Internet site to the database.

“In passing HB 3430, the Texas legislature is empowering taxpayers to become true fiscal watchdogs,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“Lacking information on how government spends taxpayer dollars makes it difficult for citizens to make informed decisions and to partake in the political discourse. Lone Star State lawmakers understand that it is time to give them a tool to hold their elected officials accountable.”**

Several other states are currently working to follow in the footsteps of Texas. While efforts vary from state to state, they share the goal of making state government spending more transparent for the sake of American taxpayers. Kansas became the first state to pass comprehensive spending transparency legislation earlier this year. For more information visit the following link:

<http://www.atr.org/state/projects/govtransparencymap.html>

“Good government should have nothing to hide from its taxpayers,” continued Norquist. **“They are the ones footing the bill for every dollar their state government spends. Texas legislators got the memo and they have joined Kansas in setting a new standard for states around the country when it comes to bringing accountability and transparency into government finances.”**

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.

###