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28 JANUARY 2008

State Rep. Jim DeCesare Named “Friend of the Taxpayer”

State Representative sponsors bill that would empower taxpayers to track government expenditures

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Reform today announced its decision to name State Rep. Jim DeCesare (R-Bowling Green) “Friend of the Taxpayer” for his dedication to increasing transparency in Kentucky’s government finance. Rep. DeCesare has sponsored HB 105, which would give taxpayers a tool to track their tax dollars at a mouse click.

HB 105 mandates the creation of a single, searchable website detailing information about state treasury expenditures and transfers in excess of \$5,000. This includes, but is not limited to, grants and contracts.

“Rep. DeCesare understands that taxpayers, who ultimately fund any government operation, deserve to keep track of how government spends their hard-earned tax dollars,” continued Norquist. “I applaud Rep. DeCesare for his leadership in this effort to shed a light on government expenditures, making Kentucky part of a movement that is taking the country by storm. To make this bill even better, we would recommend that the dollar threshold for disclosure be eliminated as the bill makes its way through the process. The inclusion of the actual language of the expenditure document might also be advisable.”

Spurred by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, which led to the creation of www.usaspending.gov, in 2007, five states (Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota and Hawaii) passed legislation that mandates the creation of similar websites. Several other states including Texas, Missouri, South Carolina, and most recently Louisiana have taken executive action or are looking to do so. But this effort is not limited to federal and state-level efforts. For more information refer to www.ATR.org.

“Thomas Jefferson once said: ‘We might hope to see the finances of the Union as clear and intelligible as a merchant’s books, so that every member of Congress and every man of any mind in the Union should be able to comprehend them, to investigate abuses, and consequently to control them,’” continued Norquist. “The Founding Fathers had the vision, and today, we have the technology to fully implement their vision. Americans for Tax Reform is thrilled to be working with lawmakers like Rep. DeCesare and activists around the country to empower taxpayers to become fiscal watchdogs.”

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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