



## AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

Grover G. Norquist  
President

April 8, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
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Dear Mr. President:

I write to commend the Administration's efforts to increase transparency in government spending, and to urge you to use the executive powers vested in you by the U.S. Constitution to issue an executive order mandating that the actual wording of federal grants and contracts be posted on [USAspending.gov](http://USAspending.gov) for taxpayer scrutiny.

In December of 2007, the Administration successfully launched [USAspending.gov](http://USAspending.gov), which resulted from Congress and the Administration working hand in hand to enact and implement the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006.

The website provides extremely useful information on government expenditures and operations, allowing users to search expenditures by congressional district, federal agency and contractor, among other criteria.

Going further than the legislation required, the website details expenditures beginning with Fiscal Year 2000, and provides information on the level of competition of a contract, as well as a wiki forum allowing a feedback discussion. It also reports individual transactions below \$25,000.

Since its passage, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act has inspired states around the country to emulate this concept of transparency in government spending:

In 2007 Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota and Hawaii passed legislation that mandates the creation of comprehensive websites for state expenditures, including grants and contracts. Several other states including Missouri, South Carolina, Alaska, Louisiana and Nevada have taken executive action, and a number of states have already passed or are on the verge of passing similar legislation in 2008.

Some state legislative efforts go even further and look to enable taxpayers to not only view information *about* the expenditures, but the actual expenditure document through such a website.

**On behalf of taxpayers, I urge you to issue an executive order that mandates the incorporation of the contract and grant language into [USAspending.gov](http://USAspending.gov).** Users should be able to access and search the actual wording of each contract and grant, along with accompanying documents such as the initial request. **Granting access to the actual**

expenditure document will provide taxpayers with an even clearer picture on how the federal government spends their hard-earned tax dollars.

American taxpayers pick up the tab for all expenditures made by our government. They deserve to know exactly how government fulfills its job as steward of taxpayer dollars, and to see where every penny they send to Washington, DC ends up. This notion was already recognized by the Founding Fathers:

*It was Thomas Jefferson who 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."*

Congress and the Administration have taken an important step towards more accountable government. I now urge you to seize the opportunity to make the tool you have provided to taxpayers – [USAspending.gov](http://USAspending.gov) – an even more powerful one, and in doing so, make the Founding Fathers' vision of accountable government a reality.

Onward,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Norquist", written in a cursive style.

Grover Norquist