

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

18 JUNE 2008

CONTACT: John Kartch
Ellen Y. Dargie
202-785-0266

Open Book New York Sheds Light on State Spending

State Comptroller DiNapoli Creates Searchable Database of Agency Expenditures

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Reform applauds the launch of *Open Book New York* by State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. This searchable online database, hosted on his website at www.osc.state.ny.us, includes expenditures from 113 state agencies and officials as well as information on over 60,000 state contracts.

Open Book New York features searchable spending data by agency, allowing Empire State taxpayers to view agency spending on a quarterly basis dating back to fiscal year 2007. Agency expenditures are broken down by category, providing taxpayers with a comprehensive overview of employee travel and benefits, salary totals, office repairs and more. The website also features a search function for state contracts, detailing contract numbers and types in real time.

“On behalf of New York taxpayers, I congratulate Comptroller DiNapoli for taking the initiative to provide greater accountability by making expenditures available to public scrutiny. Taxpayers fund every expense made by government – they deserve to track exactly how their tax dollars are spent,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform.

Similar efforts to increase fiscal transparency at the state level have taken place with great success in recent years, with at least eleven state legislatures enacting transparency websites and four governors taking executive action to open state expenditures to the public. The website takes a somewhat different approach to government spending transparency than Project Sunlight, which focuses more on state contracts and campaign finance.

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 members of Congress and every man of any kind in the Union should be able to comprehend them, to investigate abuses, and consequently to control them,’* continued Norquist. “Comptroller DiNapoli’s initiative is an important step towards implementing greater fiscal accountability as the Founding Fathers envisioned it.”

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.

###