

February 11, 2008

Dear Colleague,

We write to urge you to join our efforts to shed a light on government spending and to empower taxpayers to become fiscal watchdogs.

This year, we were able to pass legislation in our home states which mandates the creation of comprehensive databases detailing government expenditures in a clear and consistent format that is accessible to all taxpayers on the Internet.

The measures we sponsored and helped pass in our states will give taxpayers the ability to search, access and easily track government expenditures. While the levels of disclosure required by our bills vary, we all agree that it is time to give taxpayers a tool to get a clear picture as to where their hard-earned tax dollars end up.

We come from different policy and programmatic backgrounds, and may not always agree on the issues, but here we arrive at the same conclusion: Transparency begets accountability. As such, we firmly believe that transparency is one of the cornerstones of representative democracy. After all, it is our constituents' money we appropriate and spend in government.

As steward of our constituents' hard earned tax dollars, government is supposed to be accountable to taxpayers. However, while some information on government expenditures is already open to public access in a number of states, finding and understanding the information is often problematic. Lacking information on how government spends taxpayer dollars makes it difficult for citizens to make informed decisions and to partake in political discourse.

Opacity in government spending 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. Ultimately, the legislation we encourage you to sponsor and pass in your state will help reduce fraud, waste and abuse.

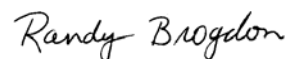
As you take on the issue in your state, we stand ready to assist you in your efforts. Sandra Fabry, state government affairs manager at Americans for Tax Reform, has copies of our legislation and will be happy to put you in touch with us. She will also be able to provide you with status updates as the effort to bring transparency into government expenditures progresses around the country. She can be reached at 202-785-0266 or sfabry@atr.org.



Rep. Kasha Kelley, KS
(R-Arkansas City)



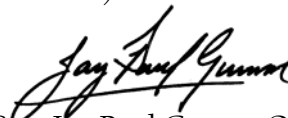
Rep. Mark Strama, TX
(D-Austin)



Sen. Randy Brogdon, OK
(R-Owasso)



Sen. Tim Huelskamp, KS
(R-Fowler)



Sen. Jay Paul Gumm, OK
(D-Durant)