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Sunshine and Palm Trees, Who Can Resist this Combination? Palmetto State Governor lets the Sun Shine in on Government Spending *Taxpayer group welcomes launch of Gov. Sanford's spending transparency website*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Reform applauds the launch of the SC.Gov Spending Transparency web portal, accessible at <https://ssl.sc.gov/SpendingTransparency/>, which went live on March 3, 2008. Gov. Mark Sanford announced the launch of the website, which was developed in cooperation with Comptroller General Richard Eckstrom following Gov. Sanford's executive order issued to this effect in August of 2007.

The web portal contains annual and monthly spending data for all state agencies, detailing funds expended and their source. Many agencies - including all cabinet agencies - have submitted even more details, and allow taxpayers to search for information on expenditure categories like travel, office supplies and contractual expenditures over \$100. Sanford is calling on other agencies to participate and make their expenditures just as transparent.

“Thanks to Gov. Mark Sanford's efforts, taxpayers in South Carolina can get a much better idea on how government spends their hard earned tax dollars,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. “Taxpayers, who foot the bill for any expenditure government makes, have been left in the dark for too long. The SC.GOV Spending Transparency portal finally draws the curtain on government expenditures. All agencies should comply swiftly and subject themselves to the same level of scrutiny as the cabinet agencies.”

The effort to empower taxpayers and give them a tool to hold their government more accountable by exposing government expenditures to greater public scrutiny has been sweeping the country since last year. At least 17 states have bills requiring the creation of searchable websites for government expenditures this year.

“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. “With the launch of Gov. Sanford's spending transparency portal, South Carolina has just taken a big leap towards implementing this vision of greater accountability.”

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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