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## Ohio House: “Let’s Shed Some Light on Government Finances”

*Spending transparency legislation clears house unanimously, moves on to senate*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Reform applauds the Ohio House of Representatives for passing H.B. 420 sponsored Rep. Tom Brinkman (*R-Mount Lookout*), a bill that would do much to empower taxpayers to track their tax dollars at a mouse click.

The bill, which unanimously passed the house on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008, would mandate the creation of a comprehensive website detailing information about state government expenditures including – but certainly not limited to – grants and contracts, require a searchable website for earmarks and provide for increased transparency in state real property tax management. Agency management standards and performance measures would also be implemented under this bill.

“Congratulations to Rep. Brinkman and his fellow house members for passing this important legislation,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. “Taxpayers, who ultimately fund every expenditure made by the government, deserve to be able to scrutinize how their tax dollars are being spent. The Ohio house is joining numerous states around the country that have seen the light on this issue, and have moved to empower their taxpayers to become true fiscal watchdogs.”

In the wake of the passage of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, five states passed legislation mandating the creation of online databases for government expenditures in 2007, and Govs. Blunt of Missouri and Sanford of South Carolina issued executive orders to this effect. This year, four states have already passed and signed spending transparency legislation, and in two additional states bills are awaiting the governor’s signature. Govs. Jindal of Louisiana, Palin of Alaska and Gibbons of Nevada took executive action to make government finances more transparent, and several state constitutional officers have embarked to do the same. For more information visit [www.ATR.org](http://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. The state house has taken the first step, now the senate should move swiftly to pass this bill before the legislature adjourns for its summer break in June, so that taxpayers can soon reap the benefits.”