

July 2, 2007

Dear Governor:

We write to urge you to emulate and go beyond the advances in bringing more openness to governmental expenditures put forth by several governors including Governor Mitch Daniels of Indiana.

While the undersigned do disagree on many other issues, we share the strong belief that taxpayers should be able to easily access clear and concise information on how their tax dollars are being spent by governments at all levels.

Early in 2005, Governor Daniels issued an executive order which enables Hoosiers to find on the Internet the total number of state contracts entered into each year, the total amount of dollars awarded under state contracts each year, and the number and percentage of Indiana businesses and out-of-state businesses to whom state contracts are awarded each year. In addition the entire text of most contracts covered by the executive order is available online.

At the federal level, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act will create a free, publicly searchable website for all federal contracts and grants. Signed into law by President Bush on September 26, 2006, the law states that OMB has to ensure the existence of a searchable website is available no later than January 1, 2008. This is only the first step, since the actual contract language will not be made available. Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle came together and joined forces to move in the right direction.

When he was Director of the Office of Management and Budget in the federal government, Mitch Daniels expressed his support for putting all federal contracts and grants online above a minimum amount and invited public comment. Included in his proposal were defense contracts, prudently redacted, which, of course, embrace a large area of governmental spending historically off limits to public scrutiny.

We urge you to work expeditiously to make the full text of all your written state expenditures and contracts, ranging from procurement of goods and services to grants, leaseholds and labor contracts, available to the public on the Internet in a clear and searchable format.

We encourage you to require not only state agencies to disclose their expenditures and contracts, but also to extend this requirement to all subdivisions of government, including school districts, counties, cities, special districts and public authorities.

We come from different policy and programmatic backgrounds, but here we arrive at the same conclusion: Transparency is one of the core principles of representative democracy. Another way of putting it is that "information is the currency of democracy."

We look forward to your positive response and stand ready to assist you in this spreading movement for the *public's right to know*.

Sincerely,



Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform
1920 L Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
202-785-0266



Ralph Nader
Consumer Advocate
PO Box 19312
Washington, DC 20036
202-387-8034