



April 17, 2007

## Taxpayers Support Creating Grant and Contract Database in Florida

Dear Legislator:

On behalf of our tens of thousands of members in Florida, we ask you to support SB 2516, which is sponsored by Senator Ronda Storms. If signed into law, this legislation would create a public website (available by July 1, 2007) that would list every state or local government contract worth over \$5,000. By providing information on the contract's purpose as well as an electronic copy of the formal contractual agreement, this database would better enable residents to make sense of how their tax dollars are being parceled out.

As you may know, last year President Bush signed S. 2590, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, into law. Originally sponsored by Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Barack Obama (D-IL), the bipartisan legislation directs the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to create a searchable online database (located at [www.federalspending.gov](http://www.federalspending.gov)) that the general public can use to track the flow of hundreds of billions of dollars in federal grant and contract expenditures.

Florida residents deserve the same kind of tool from Tallahassee. Creating a similar contract website on the state scale would entail little cost, but it would greatly increase transparency in the distribution of precious tax dollars and help hold elected officials accountable for their contract spending. More than a dozen other states have already created their own versions of a contract database, and Florida should join this forward-thinking trend. Indeed, the decision by Governor Charlie Crist to create the "Office of Open Government" by executive order has already put Florida on the right path. You can move the transparency effort forward even further by passing SB 2516 and working to make grant spending more comprehensible.

As we found at the federal level, support for this legislation will likely transcend party lines. Advocates from across the opinion spectrum share the common notion that transparency of and public access to government information is vital to the health of our political system. We sincerely hope you decide to support this legislation and help pass it into law. If we can be of any assistance in this effort, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Sincerely,

Kristina Rasmussen  
Sr. Government Affairs Manager  
National Taxpayers Union

David Williams  
Vice President, Policy  
Council for Citizens Against  
Government Waste

Curtis Holmes  
President  
Taxpayers Association, Inc.