



November 29, 2007

## **An Open Letter to Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell Make All State Spending Information Available to Taxpayers Online**

Dear Governor Rell:

On behalf of the 4,600 Connecticut members of the National Taxpayers Union, I write to commend your efforts to bring greater transparency to certain state expenditures. Currently, Connecticut taxpayers can find information concerning state bond spending online via the Connecticut Bond Allocation Database, and state contracting details can be found at the Department of Administrative Services' Contracting Portal. These are important tools for taxpayers, and we applaud your leadership.

In light of the discussions taking place in your state over contractor transparency compliance, **we believe this is an opportune time for you to demand greater public scrutiny over more areas of government spending.** This can be accomplished through a single, searchable online database of all state government expenditures. Kansas, for example, recently created a comprehensive website that includes contract details as well as information on grants, disbursements by state agencies, public salaries and wages (including compensation paid to individual state employees), and capital outlays. We encourage you to add these spending categories to Connecticut's public disclosure rules.

Several of your fellow governors have advanced transparency measures through the power of executive orders and agency directives. For example, Missouri Governor Matt Blunt launched a website ([www.mapyourtaxes.mo.gov](http://www.mapyourtaxes.mo.gov)) that publishes state government spending data with daily updates. In Texas, Governor Rick Perry decided to post all of his office's expenditures online, and the Texas Legislature later created a user-friendly database containing information on most state outlays. Governor Mark Sanford of South Carolina created a new website that will allow the public to freely search a wide array of state expenditures. He also called on all cabinet agencies to build their own databases of internal travel and office supply expenses.

These highly commendable efforts are in large part a state response to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act signed into law by President George W. Bush last year. This legislation, sponsored by Senators Barack Obama (D-IL) and Tom Coburn (R-OK), directs the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to create a searchable online database that can be easily used by the public to research federal grant and contract expenditures. Soon, taxpayers will be able to visit [www.federalspending.gov](http://www.federalspending.gov) to track where their tax dollars are spent.

An outside report recently named Connecticut as the nation's most transparent state. We urge you to maintain and expand this lead by putting even more state spending data online. **You can visit [www.showmethespending.org](http://www.showmethespending.org) for more information on this important topic**, and please do not hesitate to call upon us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Kristina Rasmussen  
Director of Government Affairs