



March 7, 2008

**An Open Letter to the Kentucky House of Representatives:
Taxpayers Support Spending Transparency Web Site (HB 105)**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the nearly 3,000 Kentucky members of the National Taxpayers Union, **we urge you to pass House Bill 105, which creates an expansive online database containing detailed expenditure information.**

HB 105 would create a Web site that provides information on government grants, contracts, subcontracts, purchase orders, and other expenditures in excess of \$5,000. While such a database would furnish citizens with valuable details about Frankfort's fiscal operations, taxpayers would be better served by having access to all government outlays, regardless of the amount.

In addition, it is important that elected officials preserve the privacy of their citizens. Accordingly, we recommend that information pertaining to tax exemptions and credits be withheld from the database. **Nonetheless, it is imperative that you move forward with this legislation and enable Kentucky's residents to make sense of how their tax dollars are parceled out.**

Many states (such as Hawaii, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas) have recently approved or implemented spending Web sites for their own residents' use. These highly commendable efforts are in large part a state response to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act that was signed into law in 2006. The resulting Web site was launched in December 2007, and taxpayers can now visit www.USASpending.gov to track outlays for federal grants and contracts.

Support for spending disclosure has transcended party lines at both the federal and state levels – and for good reason. Policy makers on both sides of the aisle understand the importance of accountability in government. It is vital that the veil of secrecy be lifted and ordinary citizens be given the ability to scrutinize government expenditures. This access will help promote an informed conversation over public policies and reduce waste and fraud.

Taxpayers deserve to know how their money is spent. We encourage you to support HB 105 and bring transparency to Kentucky's government.

Sincerely,

Kristina Rasmussen
Director of Government Affairs