

SB

2

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/21/09

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 4/2/09
 (in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
 IN TO OFFICE: 4/7/09

State Affairs Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 2

SB 2 PUBLIC FINANCE WEBSITE

"An Act relating to the establishment and maintenance of an Internet website providing public finance information, and identifying the information to be available on the Internet website."

and recommends:

- be replaced with SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous SCS or CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

SENATE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title
<hr/>	
HOUSE BILL:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical Title Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Title w/ SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indel	Zero	FN#
Adm	4/3			✓	1

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Indel	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
<i>Alice Popple</i>	Kyolale	X			
<i>Joe Parkison</i>	PASKIAN	X			
<i>[Signature]</i>	French	X			
<i>K. Meyer</i>	Meyer	X			
CHAIR: <i>Lynnda Menard</i>	MENARD	X			

SB2

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: ①
Bill Version: SB002
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier (file name): SB002-DOA-DOF-04-03-09
Title: An Act relating to an Internet website providing public finance
Dept. Affected: Administration
RDU: Centralized Admin Services
Component: Finance
Sponsor: Sens. Wielechowski, Therriault
Requester: (S)STA
Component Number: 59

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2010	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual								
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES								
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()								
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2009) cost: _____

POSITIONS

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The Department of Administration, Division of Finance, maintains the Checkbook Online web page located at http://fin.admin.state.ak.us/dof/checkbook_online, which already fulfills many of the requirements contained in Section 3 of the bill. A monthly update is performed using the Alaska Data Enterprise Reporting (ALDER) data warehouse which contains data from the central accounting system. Additional ALDER development already funded and in-progress will provide the source for most of the other requirements contained in the Bill. The only exception is the revenue information which must be provided by the Department of Revenue.

Maintenance of the Checkbook Online website is part of the division's ongoing workload and no additional funding is anticipated.

Prepared by: Scot Arehart
Division: Finance
Approved by: Kevin Brooks
Deputy Commissioner

Phone 465-5601
Date/Time 4/3/09 4:30 PM
Date 4/3/09 5:00 PM

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Co-chair
Joint Armed Services Committee
Resources Committee

Member
Energy Committee
Judiciary Committee
World Trade Committee

Senator_Bill_Wielechowski@legis.state.ak.us

SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

Sponsor Statement: SB 2 The Alaska Open Government Act

The intent of SB 2, the Alaska Open Government Act, is to create a free, searchable website that provides Alaskans with easy access to detailed and comprehensive information on state spending. This will encourage better understanding of state operations and, ultimately, reduce waste and ensure that funding is directed to the state's most important needs. Although the Governor has an on-line checkbook, this does not provide any "big picture" context about state expenditures vs. revenues. SB 2 will improve and build on the Governor's efforts and is supported by the Administration.

Across the country, taxpayers are clamoring for better information and greater accountability from government. The federal government recently posted its expenditures online at www.federalspending.gov, following passage of the bipartisan Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act. Since passage of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (S.2590) in 2006, at least 18 states, including Kansas, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Texas and Utah passed similar legislation calling for the creation of on-line databases with their state's expenditures. At least 25 other states are currently considering "taxpayer transparency acts," including Montana, New Mexico, Michigan, Illinois, Georgia, Colorado, and Oregon.

SB 2 will give Alaskans easy access to detailed information on state expenditures and revenue, empowering them to become fiscal watchdogs. It will lead to greater government accountability and a public better able to assist in making difficult government decisions.

Please join me in supporting this much needed legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Wielechowski".

Senator Bill Wielechowski

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
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MEMORANDUM

March 13, 2009

SUBJECT: Internet website for state financial information
(SB 2, Work Order No. 26-LS0007A)

TO: Senator Bill Wielechowski
Attn: Shelly Morgan

FROM: Dennis C. Bailey *DCB*
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill.

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents.

Section 1. Names the Act the Alaska Open Government Act.

Section 2. Requires that the Department of Administration make available electronically for use in the public finance Internet website, the annual report of the financial transactions of the state and the annual audit.

Section 3. Requires the Department of Administration to operate a searchable database available to the public using an Internet website that includes financial information describing certain state revenues and expenditures, requires the Department of Revenue and other state agencies that use the central accounting system to provide information to the Department of Administration, disclaims an effect of creating an Internet financial database on otherwise confidential information, but allows that confidential information may be aggregated or summarized if confidentiality is protected, and defines "expenditure" and "searchable Internet website."

Section 4. Requires the website to be operating on or before October 1, 2010.

Section 5. Provides for transition.

DCB:ljw
09-155.ljw



AMERICANS for TAX REFORM

Grover G. Norquist
President



Center for Fiscal Accountability

WWW.ATR.ORG

WWW.FISCALACCOUNTABILITY.ORG

2009 State Legislative Spending Transparency Efforts (preliminary list, as of March 16)

1920 L Street NW

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20036

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www.ATR.org

Alabama:

SB 204, sponsored by Rep. Arthur Orr (R-Decatur), mandates the construction of a searchable online database. This transparency site is to feature all state expenditures, including contracts and grants. The bill mandates that the site be ready for launch by October 1, 2010.

Read for the second time in the Senate, assigned to the Finance Committee, on February 5, 2009.

Arizona:

SB 1142, sponsored by Sen. Jonathan Paton (R-Tucson), establishes searchable online databases for all state and local expenditures. The proposed bill provides for the creation of a user-friendly site containing all state monies, while protecting personal information, with a deadline for launch by January 1, 2010. The bill also mandates that all cities, towns, and counties establish similar transparency websites, with larger jurisdictions set for launch by January 1, 2010, and smaller locales by 2011.

Introduced on January 26, 2009.

Arkansas:

HB 1053, titled the Open Checkbooks in Government Act, sponsored by Dan Greenberg (R-Little Rock), call for the creation of a searchable website cataloguing all state expenditures and bond proceeds. The website also will include electronic copies of all state grants, contracts, and subcontracts, as well as a listing of all public meetings.

Read for the second time and assigned to State Agencies and Governmental Affairs Committee on January 12, 2009.

Colorado:

HB 1288, entitled the Colorado Taxpayer Transparency Act, sponsored by Rep. B.J. Nikkel (R-Larimer County), mandates the publication of state revenue and expenditures in a single searchable website. The information is currently compiled in the State Financial System Database, and the legislation makes this information available for public scrutiny by January 1, 2010.

Referred favorably from Finance to Appropriation with amendment on March 4, 2009.

Connecticut:

HB 5097, sponsored by William Hamzy (R-Terryville), aims to make public the state budget. A brief bill, it orders the Office of Policy and Management as well as the Office of Fiscal Analysis to publish their budgets on the Internet.

Referred to Appropriations Committee on January 15, 2009.

Delaware:

HB 1, titled An Act to Amend Title 29 of the Delaware Code Relating to the Freedom of Information Act, sponsored by Rep. Robert Gilligan (D-Wilmington), passed committee. The bill allows for public access to Delaware General Assembly meetings, as well as all General Assembly Records.

Reported out of the House Administration Committee on its merits on January 21, 2009.

Rep. Greg Lavelle will be sponsoring legislation pushing for the creation of a state transparency website.

Florida

HB 791, sponsored by Representative Dorothy L. Hukill (R-Port Orange) and titled the Government Accountability Act was passed unanimously in the house on March 17, 2009. The act creates a searchable website where Floridians are able to track their tax dollars and will be launched by July 1, 2009.

Georgia

Legislation created by Senator Chip Rogers (R-Woodstock) was signed into law in May of 2008 mandating the creation of a website that would provide taxpayers with access to information about state expenditures. The site includes an area where Georgians can search for a performance audit on a specific agency, allowing them to see how effective government agencies have been over the past five years.

Illinois:

HB 0194, sponsored by Suzanne Bassi (R-Palatine), aims to establish a "single searchable updated database website" containing information on every entity that receives state funds. The website will be launched by July 1, 2010 under the direction of the Governor's Office of Management and Budget.

Assigned to the State Government Administration Committee on February 4, 2009. Hearing Scheduled for February 10, 2009.

HB 0035, sponsored by Rep. Michael Tryon (R-Crystal Lake), establishes the Illinois Accountability Portal. The Portal will include databases of all State employee and consultant salaries, expenditures, tax credits, and contracts, as well as a database including all revocations and suspensions of state employment or professional licenses. The bill has been amended to impose a deadline for launch by January 1, 2011.

Bill recommended for passage by the State Government Administration Committee on February 10, 2009. Amendment proposed by Rep. Tryon and recommended for adoption by the Rules Committee on March 10, 2009.

Iowa

HF 74, the Iowa Taxpayer Transparency Act of 2009, sponsored by Rep. Kraig Paulsen (R-Hiawatha) would create a single website database for taxpayers to search state expenditures and all tax rates across the state.

Referred to the State Government Committee on January 23, 2009, and assigned to the Subcommittee, Rep. Frevert (D-Emmetsburg), Chair, on January 26, 2009.

SF 102, is identical to the House version and is sponsored by Sen. Paul McKinley (R-Chariton)

Introduced and referred to the State Government Committee on February 4, 2009. Assigned to the Subcommittee, Sen. Courtney (D-Burlington), Chair, on February 5, 2009.

Kansas:

SB 226, introduced by Sen. Tim Huelskamp (R-Fowler), is an expansion of the Kansas Taxpayer Transparency Act to include the single largest function of government dollars in Kansas – the 300 local school districts. The bill also mandates the publication of each legislator's votes on any bill during the legislative session.

Introduced on February 5, 2009 and referred to the Ways and Means Committee on February 6, 2009.

Michigan:

HB 4043, sponsored by Rep. Kim Meltzer (R-Lansing), seeks to establish a searchable website containing information on all state expenditures. A concisely worded bill, it amends the Management and Budget Act. Currently, the Office of Management and Budget of Michigan does not even have access to information of the expenditures of all state agencies. The bill requires the compilation of the list of expenditures of each state agency for inclusion in the website.

Referred to the Committee on Oversight and Investigations on January 22, 2009. Reassigned to the Committee on Urban Policy on February 5, 2009.

HB 4150, entitled the Management and Budget Act, sponsored by Rep. Paul Opsommer (R-DeWitt), mandates the creation of a searchable website cataloguing all state expenditures including purchases, contracts and grants. The site is required to be in operation by January 1, 2010.

Referred to the Committee on Oversight and Investigations on February 4, 2009.

HB 4121, sponsored by Tom McMillin (R-Auburn Hills), features language identical to HB 4150.

Referred to the Committee on Oversight and Investigations on January 27, 2009.

Missouri:

HB 174, sponsored by Rep. Stanley Cox (R-Sedalia), intends to add to the required information the governor must submit to the legislature, specifically, the dispersal of state funds through contracts and tax issuances. The new information will be searchable and available on the Missouri Accountability Portal website.

Referred to Corrections and Public Institutions Committee on January 22, 2009.

SB 155, sponsored by Sen. Jack Goodman (R-Mt. Vernon), is identical to the bill proposed in the house.

Referred to the Governmental Accountability and Fiscal Oversight Committee on January 26, 2009. Hearing scheduled for February 12, 2009.

Montana:

SB 241, the Taxpayer Right to Know Act, sponsored by Sen. Joe Balyeat (R-Bozeman), aims to create a searchable state website cataloguing revenue, appropriations, and expenditures of state funds. The legislation, proposed on January 17, 2009, sets a goal for launching the site by July, 2009.

Referred to the State Administration Committee on January 17, 2009. Hearing in committee took place on January 28, 2009.

New Jersey:

S 445 sponsored by Sen. Joe Pennacchio (R-Morris) seeks to create a state public finance website. This searchable site is set to include all revenues, expenditures, and compensation for state employees, as well as state bond debts. This searchable website is required to be launched by . The legislation also creates the Public Finance Transparency Committee to oversee the website and act in advisory the Chief Technology Officer and State Treasurer.

Fiscal Estimate Report introduced on January 12, 2009.

Corresponding house legislation: AB 1691, titled the Transparency in Government Act, sponsored by Assemblywoman Allison Littell McHose (R-Sparta), and Assemblymen Gary Chiusano (R-Sparta), and Jay Webber (R-Morris Plains).

Fiscal Estimate Report introduced on January 15, 2009.

New Mexico:

SB 159, called the Budget Transparency Act, sponsored by Sen. Sander Rue (R-Albuquerque), proposes the creation of an online searchable budget database including expenditures of state and local governments. Local governments will be required to publish their budgets by June 1, 2010, while the state site will be launched by October 1, 2010.

Referred to the Senate Corporations and Transportation Committee on January 21, 2009.

North Dakota:

HB 1377, sponsored by Rep. Blair Thoreson (R-Fargo), seeks to establish a searchable database of state expenditures. The bill requires that the database include the author, recipient, source of funds, and purpose for all state expenditures. The legislation sets a deadline of January 1, 2010, and establishes strict oversight by the Director of Budget.

Read and referred to the Appropriations Committee on January 12, 2009. Hearing held on January 19, 2009.

Oregon:

HB 2500, sponsored by Reps. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay), Jefferson Smith (D-Portland), Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer, Newberg, St. Paul), and Gene Whisnant (R-Sunriver) would create a searchable website detailing comprehensive information on government revenues and expenditures including recipients of funds, location, purpose, and performance outcome. Salary information is also included, as well as links to each state agency transaction register.

Referred to the Rules Committee with Subsequent referral to the Ways and Means Committee on February 3, 2009.

HB 2037, sponsored by Rep. Dave Hunt (D-Clackamas County), will create a public, online, searchable database for all government contracts. This is a lengthy, thorough bill that places heavy emphasis on the procedure through which various government agencies must go in order to properly report and publish state contracts.

Referred to the Business and Labor Committee on January, 15, 2009.

Pennsylvania:

SB 105, entitled the Taxpayer Transparency Act, sponsored by Sen. Patrick Browne (R-Allentown), mandates the creation of a searchable online budget database. The site is set to include all grants, contracts, appropriations, tax exemptions, and tax credits by June 1, 2009.

Referred to Finance on February 6, 2009.

SB 107, entitled the Government Salary Information Act, sponsored by Sen. Dominic Pileggi (R-Chester), establishes a searchable online database featuring the salaries of Commonwealth Agency employees, and mandates the creation of similar sites by all local jurisdictions by July 1, 2009.

Referred to State Government on January, 29, 2009.

Tennessee:

HB 301, entitled the "Taxpayer Transparency Act," introduced by Rep. G.A. Hardaway (D-Memphis), mandates that the Department of Finance and Administration create a searchable website publishing all state "taxpayer investments." The site is to include all contracts, grants, and appropriations for public viewing by January 1, 2010.

Placed on s/c cal Budget of FW&M for 3/04/09 on 2/25/09

SB 509, introduced by Sen. Tim Burchett (R-Knoxville), features language identical to that of HB 301.

Referred to the Tax Subcommittee

HB 246, entitled the "Taxpayer Transparency Act," introduced by Rep. Susan Lynn, mandates the creation of a single searchable website cataloguing all state expenditures including grants, contracts, appropriations, and tax credits. The site will be available for public viewing by January 1, 2010.

Assigned to the Budget Subcommittee of the Finance, Ways, and Means Committee on February 18, 2009

Texas:

HB 1307, sponsored by Rep. Brandon Creighton (R-Conroe), mandates that schools post all expenditures, checks written, and credit card transactions online within one month.

Filed February 17, 2009.

HB 1314, sponsored by Rep. Mark Strama (D-Austin), is also under consideration, mandating that schools post their expenditures quarterly.

Filed February 17, 2009.

Utah:

SB 18, sponsored by Sen. Wayne Niederhauser (R-Sandy), mandates that municipalities previously excluded from the Utah Public Finance Website provided information and records for public view. The bill also includes provisions requiring easier search functions and for local governments to provide links to their websites.

Passed senate on February 2, 2009. Received a favorable recommendation from House Government Operations Committee on February 6, 2009, and was referred to Rules Committee due to fiscal impact.

Virginia:

SB 936, sponsored by Ken Cuccinelli (R-Fairfax), attempts to create a searchable website containing all of Virginia's revenues, appropriations, and expenditures, going further than the Commonwealth Datapoint currently does. The website will be placed under the supervision of the Office of the Secretary of Technology in the Virginia Enterprise Application Program (VEAP). The bill calls for the Director of VEAP to develop the site for public use by July 1, 2010.

Reported Favorably from the Finance Committee on February 5, 2009.

HB 2285, sponsored by Del. Ben Cline (R-Amherst), is the house version of S. 936.

Reported with a substitute from the Appropriations Committee on February 6, 2009, engrossed by House - committee substitute on February 9, 2009.

West Virginia

SB 3091, sponsored by Del. Jonathan Miller (R-Berkeley) and named the Budget and Spending Transparency Act aims to create a searchable online database wherein taxpayers will have access to all state government spending. The website is to be created no later than January 1, 2010.

Introduced on March 12, 2009; referred to the Committee on the Judiciary then Finance

Wisconsin

HB 120, introduced on March 4, 2009 by Robin Vos (R-Racine) seeks to create a searchable website that would allow Wisconsin taxpayers to see any government expenditures exceeding \$100. It would also provide information on state contracts and grants. The website would be launched by July 1, 2011.

Referred to Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security on March 4, 2009

Wyoming:

HB 144, sponsored by Sue Wallis (R-Recluse), will create a searchable Internet database of state expenditures, audits and budgets by January 1, 2010. The bill also creates the Select Committee on Technology, Reporting, and Analytics, which will assemble the website and report its findings and the state of the public finance site to the legislature.

Passed by Committee of the Whole on February 5, 2009. Laid back pursuant to HR 9-3 c.

For further information please contact Sandra Fabry, government affairs manager and executive director of the Center for Fiscal Accountability at 202-785-0266 or via email at sfabry@atr.org
www.fiscalaccountability.org

Active Spending Transparency Websites Launched since 2007
(result of legislative or gubernatorial action)

Alabama - Open Alabama



<http://www.open.alabama.gov/>; live since March 2009

- created by Executive Order 46, signed by Gov. Bob Riley on February 11, 2009.

Alaska - Checkbook Online



http://fin.admin.state.ak.us/dof/checkbook_online/index.jsp; live since January 2008

- created by cooperation of Gov. Sarah Palin (R) with Department of Administration.

Georgia - Open Georgia



www.open.georgia.gov/; live since January 2009

- created by legislation: SB 300 by Sen. Chip Rogers (R-Woodstock), signed into law in May, 2008.

Kansas - KanView



www.kansas.gov/kanview/; live since March 2008

- created by legislation: HB 2457 by Rep. Kasha Kelley (R-Arkansas City), signed into law in June 2007.

Kentucky - Open Door



<http://opendoor.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>; live since January 2009

- created by Executive Order #2008-0508, signed June 6, 2008 by Gov. Steve Beshear (D).

Louisiana - LaTrac



www.doa.louisiana.gov/latrac/index.cfm; live since September 2008

- created by legislation (SB 37 by Sen. Joel T. Chaisson II) and Gov. Jindal's Executive Order BJ 2008 -2 signed January 15, 2008.

Maryland



<http://www.spending.dbm.maryland.gov/> live since January 2009

- created by legislation: HB 358, sponsored by Del. Warren Miller (R-Annapolis); signed into law in May 2008.

Missouri - Missouri Accountability Portal (MAP)



www.mapyourtaxes.mo.gov; live since July 2007

- created by Gov. Matt Blunt's (R) Executive Order 7-24, signed July 11, 2007.

Nevada – Nevada Open Government Initiative



www.nevadaspending.com; live since January 2009

- created by Gov. Jim Gibbons's Executive Order EO-2008-03-18, signed March 18, 2008.
-

Oklahoma - OpenBooksOK



www.ok.gov/okaa/; live since December 2007

- created by legislation: SB 1 by Sen. Randy Brogdon (R-Owasso), signed into law in June 2007.
-

South Carolina – South Carolina Spending Transparency



<https://ssl.sc.gov/SpendingTransparency>; live since March 2008

- created by Gov. Mark Sanford's Executive Order 2007-14, signed August 31, 2007.
-

South Dakota – OpenSD.Gov



<http://open.sd.gov/>; live since September 2008

- created by the Office of Finance and Management per Gov. Mike Rounds's (R) instructions.
-

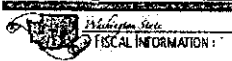
Texas – Window on State Government



www.window.state.tx.us/comptrol/expendlist/cashdrill.php; gradually rolled out in 2007

- created by legislation and executive action: HB 3430 by Rep. Mark Strama (D-Austin), signed into law in June 2007, Comptroller Susan Combs (R) began implementation before passage of bill.
-

Washington – Washington State Fiscal Information



<http://fiscal.wa.gov/> live since December 2008

- created by legislation: SB 6818 by Sen. Eric Oemig (D-Kirkland), signed into law in April 2008.
-

Websites Created by Other State Constitutional Officers since 2007

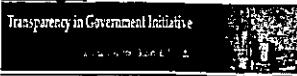
Arizona



State Treasurer Dean Martin (R) publishes the State Shared Revenue distributions database.

www.aztreasury.gov/distributions.html

Georgia



Secretary of State Karen Handel (R) launched the Transparency in Government Initiative allowing taxpayers to view some spending information for her agency. www.sos.georgia.gov/TIG/

Illinois



State Comptroller Dan Hynes (D) hosts a website that tracks political contributions made by companies that have state contracts. www.OpenBook.ioc.state.il.us.

Kentucky



Secretary of State Trey Grayson (R) launched Check it Out Kentucky! - an online checkbook register for the secretary's office. www.sos.ky.gov.

Michigan



State Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land (R) has posted her agency's expenditures online. www.michigan.gov/sos



Attorney General Mike Cox (R) also posts his office's expenditures online. www.michigan.gov/ag

Nebraska



State Treasurer Shane Osborn (R) hosts www.NebraskaSpending.com giving information on some state expenditures.

New York



State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli (D) hosts Open Book New York on his website at www.osc.state.ny.us.



Attorney General Andrew Cuomo (D) previously launched Project Sunlight at www.sunlightny.org.

Pennsylvania

State Treasurer Robin Wiessman (D) hosts a contract library at www.patreasury.org/Right-to-Know/RTKWelcome.htm

Rhode Island



State Treasurer Frank DiCaprio (D) hosts the Treasury Checkbook Online at <http://www.ri.gov/opengovernment/treasury/>.



The Department of Administration hosts the DOA Transparency Portal at <http://www.ri.gov/opengovernment/DOA/>.

Executive Orders/Passed Legislation Awaiting Implementation

Executive Orders:

North Carolina:

- no firm implementation date set
- Executive Order No. 4, signed by Gov. Bev Perdue (D) January 2009.

Passed Legislation:

Arizona

- Website to be launched by 2011
- SB 1235, sponsored by Sen. Tom O'Halleran (R-Sedona), signed July 7, 2008.

Hawaii

- Website to be launched by Jan. 2009 - administration says won't implement as mandated.
- HB 122, sponsored by Rep. Markus Oshiro (D-Wahiawa), became law without gov's signature in 2007.

Minnesota

- Effective date for website was Jan. 1, 2008
- HF 376, sponsored by Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Eden Prairie), signed into law in June 2007.

Mississippi

- No firm implementation date set
- HB 101, subst. HB 725, sponsored by Rep. Toby Barker (R-Hattiesburg), signed into law in April 2008.

Ohio

- Website to be launched no later than one year after effective date.
- HB 420, sponsored by Rep. Tom Brinkman (R-Mount Lookout), signed into law in December 2008.

Utah

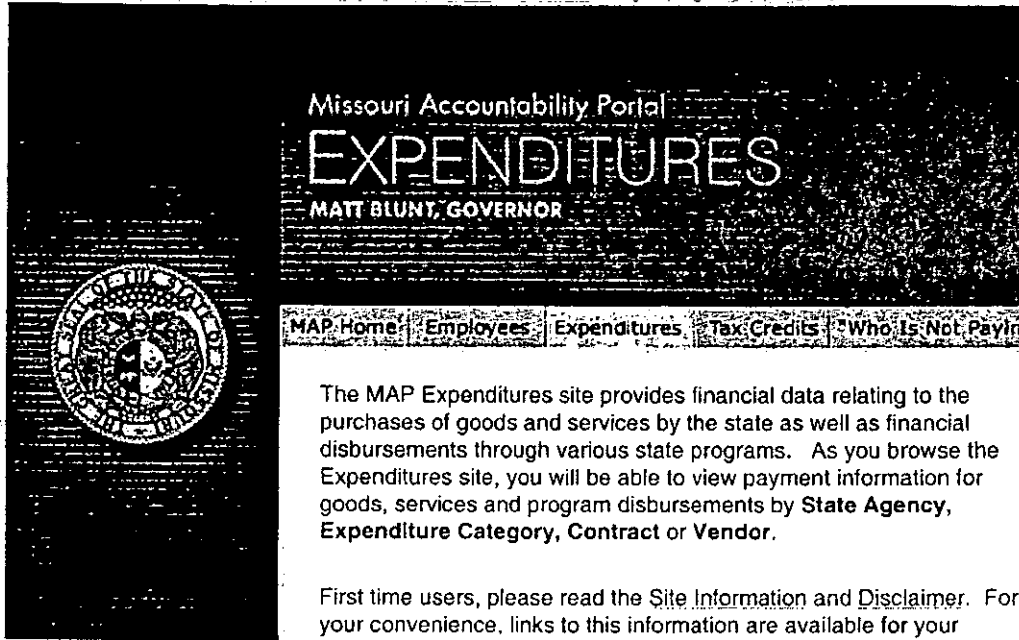
- Website to be launched by May 15, 2009
- SB 38, sponsored by Sen. Wayne Niederhauser (R-Sandy), signed into law in March 2008.

State Think Tank Transparency Efforts

Many state think tanks have begun to create their own transparency projects. While not all of these projects focus exclusively on 'spending transparency' in its strictest terms - some of them focusing on transparency in voting, for example - all of them play an important roll in the effort to increase government accountability through transparency. Visit www.fiscalaccountability.org to learn more.

For more information contact Sandra Fabry, Executive Director of the Center for Fiscal Accountability at cfa@atr.org

www.fiscalaccountability.org
722 12th Street NW, 4th Floor / Washington, DC 20005 / p 202-785-0286 / f 202-785-0281 / cfa@atr.org
A Special Project of Americans for Tax Reform



[MAP Home](#) |
 [Employees](#) |
 [Expenditures](#) |
 [Tax Credits](#) |
 [Who Is Not Paying?](#)

The MAP Expenditures site provides financial data relating to the purchases of goods and services by the state as well as financial disbursements through various state programs. As you browse the Expenditures site, you will be able to view payment information for goods, services and program disbursements by **State Agency**, **Expenditure Category**, **Contract** or **Vendor**.

- [Site Information](#)
- [Disclaimer](#)
- [Contact Information](#)
- [MAP Home](#)

First time users, please read the [Site Information](#) and [Disclaimer](#). For your convenience, links to this information are available for your reference throughout the site.

Find out what your tax money is doing – with MAP it's easy! To begin, click on any of the following search options:



Search by
AGENCY



Search by
CATEGORY



Search by
CONTRACT



Search by
VENDOR

Site information current as of close of business on January 30, 2008

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● **Benefits of the Alaska Open Government Act**

Thomas Jefferson's thoughts on government transparency (from 1802):

● "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."

Alaska opens checkbook to public

By Pat Forgey | JUNEAU EMPIRE

Alaskans who want to make sure their state government is spending their money wisely can now rummage through the state's checkbook, and see what they can find.

The new Online Checkbook feature in the state's Web site lets the public look through listings of all the bills paid and grants awarded by the state government in the last six months.

"It's a very, very good tool for Alaskans to see where their money is going," said Gov. Sarah Palin at a press conference Monday.

It's a new government program that both ends of the political spectrum agree is needed. National anti-tax advocate Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform and liberal Ralph Nader both support the plans to improve transparency in state government. Norquist testified before a legislative committee supporting the effort, as did Steve Cleary of the Alaska Public Interest Research Group.

Visitors to the Online Checkbook site can look up all the checks and payments made by the state so far this fiscal year, with some notable exceptions. Public employee salary information, while legally public, is not on the site. Nor are payments of less than \$1,000.

Sen. Bill Wielechowski, D-Anchorage, praised the effort Monday.

"I think there are going to be times when elected officials would rather not have this online, but it holds us accountable," he said.

Among those interested in the Online Checkbook are likely to be businesses, which may want to see how much the state is paying their competitors, he said. Those businesses may even underbid their competitors the next time around, and save the state some money.

Wielechowski said other states that have made similar efforts have gotten millions of hits on their Web sites. He brought the idea for a bill requiring the Online Checkbook to the Palin administration and got a positive response.

"They came back to us and said, 'You don't need the bill. We'll just go ahead and do it ourselves,'" he said.

Wielechowski said he's still planning to go ahead with his bill, however, and said elected officials should make the call - and take the heat - about what should and should not go online.

Requiring the state to post the information online ensures that it will remain there, even when administrations change, he said.

"If the Legislature has a say, it gives it permanence," he said. "Look at how many things Palin has reversed that (former Gov. Frank) Murkowski did."

Wielechowski said Department of Administration staff who put the information online exceeded expectations, but said the early version needs more work.

"It's a good start, but it's a little rough," he said. He said he'd like to see aggregated data and more specificity. In some cases, it is difficult to tell what a bill is for.

"We'll continue to refine the tool and respond to suggestions for improvement," said Annette Kreitzer, commissioner of the Department of Administration.

Information from the site can be downloaded in both spreadsheet and PDF formats, with additional lookup and analysis options under consideration, state officials say.

- Contact reporter Pat Forgey at 586-4816 or patrick.forgey@juneauempire.com.

A peek at the state's pocketbook

by Bill McAllister

Monday, Feb. 11, 2008

JUNEAU, Alaska -- Surfing the Internet now can include a review of the way the state of Alaska spends your money.

The Palin administration has established a state checkbook online. While it may not pose any threat to YouTube, one supporter says similar sites in other states have generated millions of hits.

In any case, Alaskans can look inside state finances with just a few keystrokes.

"It certainly is providing a new connection now between the state's financial information and the people," said Gov. Sarah Palin.

The online checkbook was officially launched last week as part of the administration's stated mission to make state government more transparent.

The site, with Excel spreadsheets and PDF files, can be searched by government agency, by vendor and by account, with purposes for the financial transactions listed.

Gregg Erickson, former publisher of the independent newsletter the Alaska Budget Report, applauds the governor.

"It's definitely a good sign. I think every governor learns that if they don't already know it that it's a lot easier to govern if you can control the flow of information," Erickson said. "If Sarah Palin didn't know that when she was elected, I'm sure she's figured that out by now. But that doesn't mean she still doesn't care about the idea of trying to make public information accessible."

House Finance Co-Chairman Mike Chenault tried out the website and says for him it might raise as many questions about state spending as it answers. He wonders if it will really give Alaskans confidence in the system.

"Is it too much information, or not enough information? I don't know. We'll have to look at it and see," said Chenault, R-Nikiski.

Sen. Bill Wielechowski, who has been working with the administration on the idea, has a bill to make it permanent.

"I think it's important that we enshrine this in law so that future governors have to do that as well. and Also I think it's important that we go ahead and have a public debate about what kind of things should be included in there, what kind of things perhaps shouldn't be included in there," said Wielechowski, D-Anchorage. "This bill gives the Legislature an opportunity to really have a say in what kind of things are in there and the public in general, since we will have public debate on it."

Still, even fans of the site have their criticisms. Wielechowski says the website should have the dates of transactions. And Erickson objects to the listing only of transactions of more than \$1,000.

The governor says she's fine with that.

"We're always in a position of being told what we can do better, so that's OK," she said.

While the site is up and running, the administration hasn't logged off of discussions about how to improve it.

Contact Bill McAllister at bmcallister@ktuu.com

Deborah Prator

From: Shelly Morgan
Sent: Wednesday, April 01, 2009 12:19 PM
To: Deborah Prator
Subject: Hearing Request for SB2: Alaska Open Government Act
Attachments: SB2 Hearing Request Letter.PDF; SB2 Sponsor Statement.PDF; SB2 LS260007_A.PDF; SB2 Sectional Analysis.PDF; 2009 state website legislative efforts_.pdf; 2009 state websites launched.pdf; Missouri website sample.PDF; SB2 Jefferson Quote.PDF; Open Checkbook Article.PDF; State Pocketbook Article.PDF

Hi Debbie,

Attached is a committee request packet for SB 2: The Alaska Open Government Act. We would appreciate if you are able to schedule this for next week.

I will be asking Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform and Mead Treadwell to testify in support.

Thanks!

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Senate Bill 2

Alaska Open Government Act

Proposal:

Establish and maintain an Internet website to provide public finance information, and to identify the information to be available on the Internet website.

Background:

- The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act introduced by a bipartisan team of four U.S. senators, including Senator John McCain and then-Senator Barack Obama, was signed into law by President Bush in 2006. This Act calls for the creation of a searchable website for federal contracts and grants of more than \$25,000, which can be found at www.federalspending.gov.
- SB 2, the Alaska Open Government Act, mandates creation of a free, searchable website that provides Alaskans with easy access to detailed information on state spending. This will foster better understanding of state operations and, ultimately, ensure that funding is directed to the state's most important needs.
- While the Administration's current website looks and functions like a check register, SB 2 calls for inclusion of information that will provide a context for the lay person for these daily expenditures.
- This "Big Picture" overview allows Alaskans to track trends, and look closer at revenue and expenditures over a 10 year span—with data summarized by source, function, department and account. Revenues and expenditures will be updated monthly.
- All confidential information will be withheld from the website, including public assistance payment to individuals. Only public information will be included.
- Currently, at least 25 other states are considering "taxpayer transparency acts." Since 2007, thirteen states have passed legislation, eight states have passed Executive Orders and dozens have launched state spending transparency websites.
- A national consensus is emerging, supported by advocates from both ends of the political spectrum—from *Ralph Nadar* to *Grover Norquist*—advocates agree that taxpayers should be able to easily track and help direct government spending.
- SB 2 would put the requirement for a free, publicly searchable database in statute, so that all future governors will show the same commitment to transparency and accountability.



AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

Grover G. Norquist
President



Center for
Fiscal
Accountability
Americans for Tax Reform

April 1, 2009

Dear Committee Member,

We write to urge you to lend your support to SB2, the Open Government Act sponsored by Sen. Bill Wielechowski.

The Open Government Act would create a single, searchable Internet website providing comprehensive information on state government finance – both revenues and expenditures greater than \$1,000, including, but not limited to grants and contracts. This measure would provide an important step towards greater fiscal accountability.

Governor Sarah Palin's decision to post the state's expenditures over the amount of \$1,000 on the Department of Administration's website is a great step in the right direction, and we applaud her efforts. At this time, the payment information is presented in excel sheets and pdf documents.

While plans to expand the level of transparency are underway, there is no guarantee that whoever succeeds the governor in that office in the future, will maintain the online disclosure of state government expenditures. In that light, SB 2's passage is crucial, because it would codify fiscal transparency into law.

Since the passage of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 which resulted in the creation of www.USASpending.gov, Americans for Tax Reform has been working with policymakers and activists around the country to pass legislation and get executive orders signed that emulate and ideally go beyond the federal legislation.

Since the beginning of 2007, thirteen states have enacted laws mandating the creation of searchable online database websites for government expenditures, and several governors have taken executive steps to the same effect. More than a dozen of these websites mandated by legislative or executive action have already gone live, and provide taxpayers with an opportunity to track their tax dollars at a mouse-click. In addition, several state constitutional officers have also taken steps to increase accountability through transparency.

This spending transparency effort is consistent with the Founding Fathers' notion of accountable government: It was Thomas Jefferson, who 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.'*

Creating such a website would provide Alaska taxpayers with a tool to access, search and easily find relevant spending information, and ultimately foster a better understanding of the ways in which government operates. Ultimately, it would help reduce fraud, waste and abuse. Opacity in the way government spends tax dollars often leaves taxpayers frustrated, and can create the perception of possible abuse of the system.

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More public scrutiny will help eliminate impropriety in dealing with taxpayer dollars – be it perceived or real impropriety.

Because it goes back to one of the most fundamental principles – accountability – this movement has broad bipartisan support. This is not a right-left issue, it is a right-wrong issue. There may not be agreement on how the money should be spent, but there is agreement that taxpayers should be able to scrutinize government expenditures. In today's digital age, there is no justification for keeping taxpayers in the dark as to how their tax dollars are being spent.

The founding fathers had the vision, and today, we have the tools at our disposal to make that vision a reality – at little cost to taxpayers:

- *The Missouri Accountability Portal, an expenditure website created via executive order by Gov. Matt Blunt, was created without the appropriation of a single additional tax dollar.*
- *The Oklahoma website, which went live on December 28, 2007 and can be accessed at www.openbooks.ok.gov, initially carried a price tag of \$300,000. In the end the implementing agency reported that the website cost only \$8,000, plus expended staff time.*
- *Even the federal grant and contract website which was unveiled in December and is accessible at www.USASpending.gov was put together at a price tag of less than \$1 million - and that covers grants and contracts of the entire federal government. The software that was used to create the federal site is available to any interested party through the organization OMB Watch.*

One additional change to the bill we suggest should be considered as this bill moves forward, is the inclusion of the actual expenditure document – the grant, contract, or purchase order for example. This would help taxpayers to get an even clearer picture of how their tax dollars are spent.

With this bill, Alaska has the opportunity to make sure that the empowerment of taxpayers in Alaska continues, and that is an opportunity that should not be missed.

Americans for Tax Reform and the Center for Fiscal Accountability urge you to support SB 2. We are looking forward to working with you to advancing accountability and transparency for the sake of Alaska taxpayers.

Sincerely



Grover Norquist
President
Americans for Tax Reform



Sandra Fabry
Executive Director
Center for Fiscal Accountability