



September 2022

Dear Mr. and Ms. Taxpayer Voter,

Federal spending is out of control and they don't want you to know about it. The fiscal irresponsibility of your elected officials and bureaucrats has taken the federal debt to levels not seen since World War II. With no end in sight.

The **U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) redacted 350,000 federal executive agency employee names from our FOIA request (2021)–roughly \$30 billion in compensation.** In the last year of the Obama administration, only 2,367 names were redacted. OPM stated, “For those instances where data element are not released, they are being withheld under FOIA Exemption 6... the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.”

The Federal Reserve has 23,000 employees. They gave us the salaries of only 367 executives. They stated, “Releasing the names and specific salary information for all employees would not shed any further light on the Board’s performance of its statutory duties.” They told us that a database of their expenditures, a checkbook, does not exist. “Staff searched Board records and made suitable inquiries with knowledgeable staff but did not locate the information you seek.” This from our country’s central bank! 23,000 employees! No database of expenditures!

The **Vice President refused to give us any information.** They claimed, “The Office of Vice President is not subject to Freedom of Information Act requests.” One would think the Vice President would want you, taxpaying voters, to know how she spent your tax dollars. Not so. Why?

The **U.S. Postal Service refused to produce line-by-line checkbook expenditures.** They stated that doing so would expose their “trade secrets.” It is hard to imagine Federal Express or UPS benefitting from the USPS’s money-losing “trade secrets.” USPS also refuses to produce bonuses paid.”

South Dakota limits public employee salary disclosure to only one at a time. The state has roughly 8,000 employees. A director at the Bureau of Finance and Management wrote, “According to our administrative rule, we do not provide lists except for legitimate state government purposes.”

The California controller refused to produce a single state expenditure. Not one transaction! We filed sunshine requests with each of the 442 state agencies and compiled state expenditures like a jigsaw puzzle. Here’s one thing we found: Governor Gavin Newsom solicited 979 state vendors. He received \$10.6 million in campaign cash. Those vendors received \$6.2 billion in state funding!

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) refuses to answer our Freedom of Information Act requests. NIH admitted they are past-due on 633 FOIA requests. NIH has understaffed FOIA production and overstaffed PR. NIH employs 86 public affairs officers who collectively cost the taxpayers \$15 million. You, the taxpayer, get their spin, but not how they spent your tax dollars. **We sued NIH. We found over \$300 million in third-party royalty (pharmaceutical company) payments enriching NIH, its leaders,**

and over 2,000 of its scientists during the past ten years. NIH redacted the invention/patent numbers, the name of the third-party payor, and the amount paid to the individual scientist!

Last spring, the **Republican House held a secret vote on earmarks.** A SECRET vote on how they spend YOUR tax dollars. 102 Republican Congressmen voted to join Democrats to bring back earmarks. Then, twenty-three newly elected Republican freshmen requested \$368 million in pet-project earmarks.

Fortunately, the world is changing. Mark Mills, in his book, The Cloud Revolution, points out that, mainly because of The Cloud and Big Data, we are on the cusp of another Industrial Revolution. A revolution that will impact every aspect of human activity, including government. **Today, there is no reason, other than direct social welfare payments and national security, why every government expenditure at every level is not available to the public promptly on their cell phones, iPads, and computers.** Today, we have the capacity to do this efficiently and economically.

Our goal at OpenTheBooks is to help bring this about. Diminishing, working to eliminate waste, fraud, duplication, and incompetence will not only address this exploding federal deficit, it will change the culture in government. Transparency can dramatically transform how we govern ourselves and it will make government programs more efficient.

Last year, OpenTheBooks filed 47,000 Freedom of Information Act requests. This year, we will increase our FOIA requests at least 20%.

The OpenTheBooks Government Expense Library, open to the public, lists over \$12 trillion in government expense items online and growing. You can find it at OpenTheBooks.com.

Our national debt is up five times in the last 20 years with no end in sight. The waste, fraud, duplication, and incompetence, is increasingly pervasive.

Addressing this exploding federal debt, this irresponsible spending, will not come from the top down. It has to start with you, the taxpaying voters. It’s your money.

Begin with your Congressman, with your Senator. Ask what they have done to address this exploding federal deficit. Ask them to put their office budget, the budget of every committee they are on online.

Again, we are not going to address this massive irresponsible spending from the top down. It has to begin with you, the taxpayers. We have to change the culture within government.

If your current elected officials continue to show a complete lack of respect for your tax dollars, you can address this in the next election by not voting for them. It’s your money. Change has to start with you.

To quote Senator Dirksen: “When I feel the heat, I see the light.” Your vote can be a heat generator.

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