

San Marcos DAILY RECORD

New Web site tracks government spending

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— The Texas Public Policy Foundation debuted TexasBudgetSource.com today, a new Web site that will provide a comprehensive resource for information on state and local government budgets and spending.

“Texas has been a leader in the movement to increase transparency of state and local government spending,” said Foundation president Brooke Rollins. “Citizens become better informed voters when they can see how their tax dollars are being spent. Spending transparency also puts governments on notice that they can no longer get away with spending tax dollars in wasteful, duplicative, or self-serving ways.”

TexasBudgetSource.com features the following information:

- Original research and analysis on the Texas state budget produced by the Texas Public Policy Foundation;
- A “spend-o-meter” that keeps a running tab on how much Texas state government has spending during the current budget cycle;
- Links to the “Where The Money Goes Website” on state agency expenditures, as administered by Comptroller Susan Combs;
- Links to the online budget information (where available) of all 254 Texas counties and Texas’ 25 largest cities;
- Links to the online check registers of more than 150 Texas independent school districts;
- “Fast Facts” about Texas government spending;
- A glossary of key budget-related terms to help the public’s understanding of budget documents; and
- Videos featuring Combs, Rep. Mark Strama, Americans for Tax Reform president Grover Norquist, and others talking about the importance of transparency in government spending.

“Instead of having to walk into dozens of different government buildings or painstakingly search all over the Internet to find how tax dollars are being spent, you can simply go to TexasBudgetSource.com,” said Talmadge Heflin, Director of the Foundation’s Center for Fiscal Policy and a former chairman of the Texas House Appropriations Committee.

“Transparency forces government to be smarter about how it spends the taxpayers’ money,” Combs said in one of the videos to be featured on the site. “It creates a culture of transparency that guards against waste.”

“The Texas Public Policy Foundation has been a longtime champion of transparency in government spending,” Rollins said. “Not only have we shown the possibilities through the legislation that passed last year, but TexasBudgetSource.com provides a template that other states can follow to make government spending more accessible to taxpayers.”

The Texas Public Policy Foundation is a non-profit, free-market research institute based in Austin, Texas.

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