



## ***Creating a More Open Government***

Senator John Cornyn's philosophy of government is based on principles put forward by our Founding Fathers: a democracy depends upon a fully informed citizenry, and open government is the cornerstone of any free society.

The Senator is proud that the state of Texas has one of the most effective laws in the United States regarding freedom of government information. While serving as Attorney General of Texas, Cornyn vigorously enforced that law and expanded its reach throughout the state. Since his election to the Senate, he has fought to bring some of that "Texas sunshine" and openness to Washington, D.C. and the federal government.

**Over the past four years, Senator Cornyn has established a strong record on open government issues.**

- ✓ Cosponsored the **Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act**, creating a single public website to track all non-classified federal funding.
- ✓ Helped pass the **Legislative Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Transparency Act** in the Senate, making it more difficult for government bureaucrats to withhold information from FOIA requests.
- ✓ Introduced the **Faster FOIA Act** to establish an advisory commission on Freedom of Information Act processing delays.
- ✓ Encouraged President Bush to issue **Executive Order 13392: Improving Agency Disclosure of Information**. The order requires federal agencies to appoint a Chief FOIA Officer to be responsible for FOIA compliance.



- ✓ Supported improvements to the **Public Interest Declassification Board**, a board established to prevent the over-classification of materials and to expedite the process through which classified documents are declassified and made available to the public.

## Senator Cornyn continues to press for additional open government measures in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

- ✓ Cosponsoring the **Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National Government Act**, bipartisan legislation that expands the accessibility and openness of government data. The bill will:

- Close FOIA loopholes that often lead to months- or years-long waits for requested information.
- Protect access to FOIA fee waivers for journalists and for those, including bloggers, who contribute to the expanding world of information.
- Establish FOIA hotlines in federal agencies and enable citizens to track the status of a request by phone or Internet.
- Place a FOIA ombudsman at each agency to review compliance with FOIA regulations.
- Strengthen incentives for agencies to act on FOIA requests in a timely manner.



Senator Cornyn's efforts in advocating open government have been recognized by:

**National Newspaper Association's  
*Sunshine in Government Award***

**Freedom of Information Foundation of  
Texas' James Madison Award**

- ✓ Cosponsored amendments to the **Legislative Transparency and Accountability Act** to provide a longer public review process before legislation is voted on, and to implement a disclosure requirement for information on financial costs of earmarks to be included in appropriations bills.
- ✓ Cosponsoring the **Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2007** to repeal an executive order impeding public access to presidential papers.

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