

ALEC EXPOSED

"ALEC" has long been a secretive collaboration between Big Business and "conservative" politicians. Behind closed doors, they ghostwrite "model" bills to be introduced in state capitols across the country. This agenda-underwritten by global corporations--includes major tax loopholes for big industries and the super rich, proposals to offshore U.S. jobs and gut minimum wage, and efforts to weaken public health, safety, and environmental protections. Although many of these bills have become law, until now, their origin has been largely unknown. With **ALEC EXPOSED**, the Center for Media and Democracy hopes more Americans will study the bills to understand the depth and breadth of how big corporations are changing the legal rules and undermining democracy across the nation.

DID YOU KNOW? Corporations VOTED to adopt this. Through ALEC, global companies work as "equals" in "unison" with politicians to write laws to govern your life. Big Business has "a VOICE and a VOTE," according to newly exposed documents. **DO YOU?**

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An Act Relating to Creating a Searchable Budget Database for State Spending Model Language

Did you know that the Evergreen Freedom Foundation--which is connected to the Kochs--was the corporate co-chair in 2011?

Intent Section

The Legislature finds that taxpayers should be able to easily access the details on how the state is spending their tax dollars and what performance results are achieved for those expenditures. It is the intent of the Legislature, therefore, to direct the [state budget office] to create and maintain a searchable budget database website detailing where, for what purpose and what results are achieved for all taxpayer investments in state government.

Short Title

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Taxpayer Transparency Act."

Definitions

"Searchable budget database website" means a website that allows the public at no cost to

(1) search and aggregate information for the following:

1. the name and principal location or residence of the entity/and or recipients of funds,
2. the amount of funds expended,
3. the funding or expending agency,
4. the funding source of the revenue expended,
5. the budget program/activity of the expenditure,
6. a descriptive purpose for the funding action or expenditure,
7. the expected performance outcome for the funding action or expenditure,
8. the past performance outcomes achieved for the funding action or expenditure,
9. any state audit or report relating to the entity or recipient of funds or the budget program/activity or agency,
10. and any other relevant information specified by the [state budget office].

(2) "programmatically search and access all data in a serialized machine readable format (such as XML) via a web-services application programming interface."

(3) "Entity/and or recipients" means:

1. a corporation,
2. an association,
3. a union,
4. a limited liability company,
5. a limited liability partnership,
6. any other legal business entity including non-profits,
7. grantees,
8. contractors, and
9. a county, city or other local government entity.

"Entity/and or recipients" does not include an individual recipient of state assistance.

ALEC's Corporate Board

--in recent past or present

- AT&T Services, Inc.
- centerpoint360
- UPS
- Bayer Corporation
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Energy Future Holdings
- Johnson & Johnson
- Coca-Cola Company
- PhRMA
- Kraft Foods, Inc.
- Coca-Cola Co.
- Pfizer Inc.
- Reed Elsevier, Inc.
- DIAGEO
- Peabody Energy
- Intuit, Inc.
- Koch Industries, Inc.
- ExxonMobil
- Verizon
- Reynolds American Inc.
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Salt River Project
- Altria Client Services, Inc.
- American Bail Coalition
- State Farm Insurance

For more on these corporations, search at www.SourceWatch.org.

(4)“Agency” means a state department, office, board commission, bureau, division, institution, or institution of higher education. This includes individual state agencies and programs, as well as those programs and activities that cross agency lines. “State agency” includes all elective offices in the Executive Branch of government and the Legislature.

(5)“Funding source” means the state account the expenditure is appropriated from.

(6) “Funding action or expenditure” shall include details on the type of spending (grant, contract, appropriations, etc.). This includes tax exemptions or credits. Where possible, a hyperlink to the actual expenditure document (in a format that is, at a minimum, as searchable as a searchable PDF format) shall be provided.

(7) “State audit or report” shall include any audit or report issued by the [state auditor, inspector general, or comptroller], legislative auditor, legislative committee, or executive body relating to the entity or recipient of funds or the budget program/activity or agency.

(8) “Director” means the Director of the [state budget office].

(9) “Shall” means the obligation or duty to perform; no discretion is granted.

Searchable Budget Database Website Created

By January 1, 20xx, the Director shall develop and make publicly available a single, searchable budget database website including the required data for the [most recent state budget]. The website shall be given a unique and simplified website address. Each state agency that maintains a generally accessible Internet site or for which a generally accessible Internet site is maintained shall include a link on the front page of the agency's Internet site to the budget database website.

Updates

The Director shall provide guidance to agency heads to ensure compliance with this section. “Effective xxx, the searchable budget database website shall be updated as new data becomes available, if feasible, but no later than 30 days upon receipt of data from the agency.”

By January 1, 20xx, the Director shall add data for the [previous budgets] to the searchable budget database website. Data for previous fiscal years may be added as available and time permits. The Director shall ensure that all data added to the searchable budget database website remains accessible to the public for a minimum of ten years.

Compliance with Act

The Director shall not be considered in compliance with this act if the data required for the searchable budget database website is not available in a searchable and aggregate manner and/or the public is redirected to other government websites, unless each of those sites has information from all agencies and each category of information required can be searched electronically by field in a single search.

**Center for Media and
Democracy's quick summary**

This model legislation would direct the state budget office to create and maintain a searchable database with detailed information on all state expenditures – including grants, contracts appropriation, etc. but excluding costly tax exemptions and credits. Data would remain accessible to the public for a minimum of ten years

About Us and ALEC EXPOSED. The Center for Media and Democracy reports on corporate spin and government propaganda. We are located in Madison, Wisconsin, and publish www.PRWatch.org, www.SourceWatch.org, and now www.ALECExposed.org. For more information contact: editor@prwatch.org or 608-260-9713.