

Congress Should Read the Bills Before they Vote! *Paul Introduces the Sunlight Rule*

March 14, 2006 Washington, DC: Congressman Ron Paul of Texas recently introduced the "Sunlight Rule," which would radically change the way Washington does business-- for the better. As Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously stated, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." Congressman Paul proposes to shine a bright light on the House of Representatives and restore integrity to that institution by putting an end to the outrageous practice of voting on huge spending bills that have not been read.

The Sunlight Rule changes the actual procedural practices of the U.S. House of Representatives. It requires all bills to be made available to members of Congress at least ten days before a vote. *The Rule also allows ordinary citizens to publicly censure their Representative if he or she votes for a bill brought to the floor without the ten-day review period.*

While it might amaze many Americans to know that members of Congress virtually never read the bills they pass, it's a common practice. Many bills are thousands of pages long and contain thousands of spending earmarks. Since most bills are never read except by their actual authors-- often staffers or even lobbyists, not the elected Representatives themselves-- the opportunities for taxpayer abuse are enormous.

"Average Americans often wonder how so much pork-barrel spending happens in Washington, and why it can't be stopped," Paul stated. "One big reason is that most members of Congress have no idea what's really in the bills they pass. The latest budget vote is a perfect example. We voted at 4 in the morning on a huge bill that wasn't even finished until midnight. Nobody could have read it. It funded thousands of pet projects and earmarks. Is this any way to vote on a budget that spends 2.7 trillion dollars?"

"That's why I introduced the Sunlight Rule, to let Congress actually read the bills they pass," Paul concluded. "It's the least they can do with your money."