

### Statement of Chairman Waxman:

“Today, Congress took an important step towards restoring openness and transparency in government. Over the past six years, the Bush Administration has done everything it can to operate in secret, to avoid public scrutiny, and to limit congressional oversight. I am pleased that Congress is reversing this course by passing four critically important good government bills with strong bipartisan support.”

**H.R. 1255, approved by a vote of 333-93**, makes clear that presidential records belong to the American people, not the president who created them. The Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2007 will nullify a Bush executive order which gave former presidents – and their heirs – nearly unlimited authority to withhold or delay the release of their own records. If it becomes law, this legislation will ensure that a complete historical record is available to researchers.

**H.R. 1254, approved by a vote of 390-34**, will require organizations that raise money for presidential libraries to disclose information about their donors. This will eliminate a major loophole that allows presidential supporters to secretly give millions in support of a president’s legacy while that president remains in office.

**H.R. 1309, approved by a vote of 308-117**, will strengthen the Freedom of Information Act and improve public access to government information. One key element of this legislation would restore the presumption of disclosure under FOIA that was eliminated by the Bush Administration in 2001.

**H.R. 985, approved by a vote of 331-94**, offers improved protections to federal whistleblowers who report wrongdoing to authorities. Federal employees and contractors are privy to information that enables them to play an essential role in ensuring government accountability.

### Documents and Links