

## Editorial

### Oath of Presidential Transparency

#### **SAN FRANCISCO -**

Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., and Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, have signed the Oath of Presidential Transparency. Strangely, the trio is alone among White House aspirants in doing so. Here's the oath they signed:

"I, \_\_\_\_\_, candidate for President of the United States, pledge to the American Public that, if elected President of the United States, my administration will be fully and robustly committed to open, transparent, and accountable government principles.

"Effective management, accountability, transparency, and disclosure of taxpayer-expended resources by federal agencies are of the utmost importance to maintain the trust of the American people. The paramount goal is effective and efficient delivery of critical government programs to the American people. Results-oriented management of federal agencies and taxpayer resources must be aggressively pursued and must provide maximum value for the public good.

"Within 30 days of accession to the Presidency, I will execute an Executive Order ensuring timely implementation of, and administrative commitment to, the letter and spirit of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006."

Here's why they signed the oath:

"Every American has the right to know how the government spends their tax dollars, but for too long that information has been largely hidden from public view," Obama said. "This historic law will lift the veil of secrecy in Washington and ensure that our government is transparent and accountable to the American people."

"Government transparency is essential to government accountability," Brownback said. "Americans need to feel they can trust their government."

"When government spends the people's money, it must be done with utmost possible transparency," declared Paul, the first to sign the oath.

There is no legitimate reason for any candidate seeking the nation's highest office not to sign the oath. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 is better known as Coburn-Obama, the law that requires the government to establish a Google-like, searchable database of most federal spending. The purpose of the database is to put every taxpayer within a few mouse clicks of knowing how their tax dollars are being spent by Uncle Sam. The database is being created by the Office of Management and Budget and is scheduled to go live in January 2008.

An ideologically diverse coalition led by the Reason Foundation is challenging the candidates to sign the oath. Among the members of the coalition are the Reason Foundation, the Project on Government Oversight, Electronic Frontier Foundation, National Taxpayers Union, Citizens Against Government Waste and 30 others. The Examiner Newspapers, which was an outspoken advocate of Coburn-Obama, also supports the oath and wonders when the remaining presidential candidates are going to sign it. And if not, why not.

*Examiner*