



July 26, 2013

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Hatch,

We understand your committee is undertaking comprehensive tax reform. We write to urge you to make all correspondence with the committee relating to this tax reform public in real time.

Multiple press accounts indicate that you have promised to keep Senatorial correspondence regarding your tax reform initiatives secret for fifty years. That is far longer than Presidential records are sealed. There are other media reports that there is an increase in tax policy related lobbying and that these special interest are making the rounds with Senators.

While the undersigned groups do not necessarily have common goals for the outcome of tax reform, we agree that transparency is essential for your final product to have credibility with the public rather than feed cynicism. Taxpayers across the United States have a right to know what their elected officials are advocating and what their justification is. We strongly urge you to reconsider this approach that smacks of backroom deals. The House Ways & Means Committee urged lawmakers and outside interests to submit their priorities and made them public. We urge a similar approach.

*Showdown at Gucci Gulch*, the seminal work on the historic 1986 tax reform legislation, was published one year after the law was enacted. If your comprehensive tax reform efforts are successful, your secrecy policy would delay that history from being written for 50 years. Again, we urge you to conduct your work in light of day.

Sincerely,

Taxpayers for Common Sense  
Government Accountability Project  
Americans for Tax Reform  
Project on Government Oversight  
Americans for Prosperity  
Tax Analysts  
Society of Professional Journalists  
FreedomWorks  
OpenTheGovernment.org  
Center for Effective Government  
The Sunlight Foundation  
American Commitment  
Society of American Archivists  
Tax Justice Network USA



AMERICAN COMMITMENT



THE SOCIETY of AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS



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 Domini Social Investments  
 Council for Citizens Against Government Waste  
 Freedom of the Press Foundation  
 Cost of Government Center  
 Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
 Business for Shared Prosperity  
 R Street Institute  
 U.S. Public Interest Research Group  
 Less Government  
 Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate  
 Fund for Constitutional Government  
 American Sustainable Business Council  
 Washington Coalition for Open Government  
 Zevin Asset Management  
 Advocacy for Principled Action in Government



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