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May 5, 2011

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Cummings:

I am in receipt of your letter of May 2, 2011. I am grateful for your interest in increasing Federal Government transparency, and I look forward to working with you as the Committee continues to pursue this very important element of its agenda. The Committee has already held at least three transparency-related hearings this year, as we continue to work toward the goal of enhancing Government-wide transparency in a comprehensive manner:

- This week, on May 3, the full committee held a hearing on, "Presidential Records in the New Millennium: Updating the Presidential Records Act & Other Federal Recordkeeping Statutes to Improve Electronic Records Preservation."
- On March 17, the full committee held a hearing on, "The Freedom of Information Act: Crowd-Sourcing Government Oversight."
- On March 11, the Committee's Subcommittee on Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations & Procurement Reform held a hearing on "Transparency Through Technology: Evaluating Federal Open-Government Initiatives."

As I have indicated in the past, I believe that any attempt to comprehensively improve transparency at the Federal level should entail global solutions, such as e.g. the institution of Government-wide data standards that make important information (such as federal spending data) available to the public in an open and accessible format. We should not be satisfied with incremental changes that allow the vast majority of Government information to be veiled from the public. I therefore do not intend to

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings

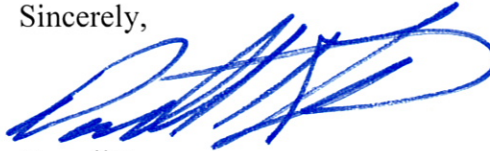
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consider H.R. 1144 in Committee. I would note that the Senate last Congress failed to approve any of the individual provisions constituting H.R. 1144, when presented with the opportunity of adopting each as stand-alone bills.

I hope that you will support the Committee's agenda of pursuing fundamental reforms in this key area of its jurisdiction. I look forward to working with you in that endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Darrell Issa', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Darrell Issa
Chairman