

February 6, 2014

Speaker John Boehner
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
United States House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We the undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for H.R. 1133, the Presidential Library Donation Reform Act, and to ask that you schedule it for a vote in the near future. This bipartisan legislation would introduce a measure of transparency to fundraising for presidential libraries.

H.R. 1133 requires fundraising organizations to submit quarterly reports on entities that have contributed above a certain threshold towards a presidential library. The bill also requires that the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) make the reports available in a searchable, sortable, downloadable database as soon as they are received.

Under the current opaque system, presidents raise funds privately to establish their presidential libraries. These efforts, which often begin long before they leave office, are unregulated and undisclosed, creating opportunities for, or the appearance of, influence-peddling. Improved transparency would help reduce the appearance of impropriety and help deter inappropriate behavior.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee favorably reported the legislation by a voice vote on March 20, 2013, less than a month after it was introduced. The legislation also was favorably received by the House in previous years, including passing the House of Representatives in the 110th Congress, only to run out of time after receiving favorable approval by the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee. We appreciate the Committee's prompt action and leadership on this issue, and hope that the House will have the opportunity to vote on the bill as soon as practicable.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. If you would like to discuss this issue in greater detail please contact Daniel Schuman, Policy Director at Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington – CREW, at dschuman@citizensforethics.org.

Sincerely,

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression

American Library Association

Campaign Legal Center

Cause of Action

Center for Media and Democracy

Center for Responsive Politics

Center for Science and Democracy, Union of Concerned Scientists

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington – CREW

Common Cause

Defending Dissent Foundation

Democracy 21

Government Accountability Project – GAP

iSolon.org

National Coalition Against Censorship

National Coalition for History

National Security Counselors

OpenTheGovernment.org

Project On Government Oversight – POGO

Public Citizen

Society of American Archivists

Sunlight Foundation

Tully Center for Free Speech at Syracuse University