



## MIRS Capitol Capsule

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And Information About Michigan Government

### Mackinac Center To Gov: Show Us The \$

The Mackinac Center issued a news release today chiding the Gov. Jennifer **GRANHOLM** administration for not sharing detailed spending information from the three state departments that overshot their budget allotments in 2006.

The free-market Mackinac Center said the Governor should swing open the door as wide as the Secretary of State's office, which shares, for example, individual travel expenses from its employees. Particularly, the departments of State Police, Corrections and Human Services should completely open their books after overspending its budget.

The administration says its departments already post the spending information online. This is the same position it took earlier this year when Attorney General Mike **COX** and legislative Republicans called on the administration to create a searchable state government expenditure Web site (See "Mike, Jack, Craig and Ralph" 02/05/08).

"We're all about accountability and information," Granholm Press Secretary Liz **BOYD** told *MIRS*. "Transparency is a defining principle of this administration. We've gotten rid of one-bid contracts and put contracts online."

Boyd said the administration's response to the Mackinac Center was to invite it to link to the state's Web site.

But according to Kenneth **BRAUN**, the director for the "Show the Money" project, the administration is missing an opportunity

to provide the type of transparency that other governmental entities provide.

"I thought there might be a reasonable chance that I'd be able to trumpet the administration for doing something positive for the people of Michigan," Braun told *MIRS* today. "I still hope there's a chance. I'd like to talk with them."

*MIRS* asked Braun what's wrong with the information that the departments involved are currently posting.

"They're only putting rough summaries online," Braun said. "It's divided into seven or eight categories, such as travel, etc. What we're looking for is the check register. Many school districts, including the Oakland ISD, are already doing it. For instance you can go the Montrose School District site and see what the school paid for the replacement of a bus radiator and who the vendor was. On the administration's sites, all you'd see is one overall number for maintenance."

Boyd said that costs involved with doing what the Mackinac Center is asking for are prohibitive under the current budgetary restraints. Regarding the overall issue, the administration has argued that because of the state's technical "legacy" problems, an entirely new database would need to be created -- and that would be more expensive than the critics claim.

"We are working with limited resources," Boyd said. "It would be far better if they'd just link to our Web site."