



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

June 11, 2008



ISMAEL AHMED
DIRECTOR

Mr. Lawrence W. Reed
Mackinac Center for Public Policy
140 West Main Street
Midland, MI 48640

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Dear Mr. Reed:

Thank your letter dated May 29, 2008. We at the Department of Human Services (DHS), along with, I believe, the entire Granholm administration, share your belief that the public has a right to know how its taxes are being used, and your commitment to making that information readily available over the internet.

We do not, however, think it makes sense to work toward that goal department by department. There is in fact a project underway within the Executive Branch to establish a single "Accountability Portal" through which citizens will be able to access spending information for all Executive Branch agencies through one site and in a consistent format. The project is being managed by the Office of Financial Management within the Office of the State Budget. My expectation is that information on DHS spending will be accessible to the public through the Accountability Portal when it is fully developed and available on the State's Web site.

We are also already devoting our staff resources to a similar project mandated by the federal government. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) requires the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to ensure the existence and operation of a single Web site at which the public may access and research data on all federal financial assistance awards. The FFATA specifies that data of federal agencies' initial awards to non-federal entities be available at the Web site by January 1, 2008 and that data on subawards be available by January 1, 2009. Because we receive and disburse about \$3 billion in federal awards, compliance with the FFATA will be a big project for us and absorb the resources we have available for this kind of work.

Because a state Accountability Portal is under development, and given our need to devote resources to coming into compliance with the FFATA, I cannot agree to participate in your project, nor do I think a meeting would be productive. John Sorbet, our chief financial officer, has the lead for the department on both the state Accountability Portal and compliance with the FFATA,. If you have questions regarding these projects please feel free to contact him. His contact information is as follows:

John W. Sorbet, Jr.
Dept. of Human Services
235 S. Grand Ave., Ste. 1511
Lansing, MI 48933
SorbetJ@Michigan.gov
517-373-7787

Mr. Reed
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Best wishes for success with your project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ismael Ahmed', written in a cursive style.

Ismael Ahmed

c: John W. Sorbet, Jr.
Pratin Trivedi
Helen Weber