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## Lawmaker shines light on spending

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*ROCHESTER ECCENTRIC*

Fresh on the heels of sponsoring legislation that would require the state of Michigan to put expenditures into a free, searchable database, state Rep. Tom McMillin posted his own office expenses on his Web site.

McMillin, a Rochester Hills Republican who took office in January, lists his staff's salaries and office spending at RepresentativeTomMcMillin.com. His proposed legislation would require all state departments to provide spending information to the state Department of Management and Budget so taxpayers could access it.

"The concept of government transparency is simple; tell the taxpayers how you are spending their money," McMillin said. "I am hopeful that the governor and House leadership will follow my example and post all state spending online."

McMillin was joined by another newcomer, Rep. Justin Amash (R-Grand Rapids) in revealing staff names and salaries online. The moves have drawn praise from the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a free-market think tank.

"It took less than five weeks for two new legislators to show how easily transparency can be achieved," said Kenneth Braun, director of the Center's Show Michigan the Money project. "This example should be followed by all of the state's elected officials."

McMillin's bill would require all funds not considered confidential to be posted, including contracts, subcontracts, grants and purchases. Names and salaries of political appointees, including office staff, are considered confidential.

Attorney General Mike Cox called on Gov. Jennifer Granholm to commit to McMillin's legislation. He pointed to a federal Web site, USAspending.gov, whose creation was cosponsored by then-Senator Barack Obama.

"It is time Michigan had a Web site that lets taxpayers see where their hard-earned money is being spent," Cox said in a statement posted on his Web site. "Citizens have a right to know how their government is spending their money."

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