

December 7, 2007

Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton
Senator Christopher J. Dodd
Senator John McCain
United States Senate

Dear Senators:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to ask you as key members of the Senate and candidates for your party's nomination for the presidency of the United States to co-sponsor S. 886, "The Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2007." This legislation is critical to restore the public's necessary faith in the trustworthiness of its government.

In November 2001, President George W. Bush issued Executive Order 13233, giving current and former presidents and vice presidents, and their heirs, broad authority to withhold presidential records or delay their release. "The Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2007" (S. 886) would re-establish procedures to ensure the timely release of presidential records that the Presidential Records Act of 1978 was designed to ensure.

The House version of this legislation (H.R. 1255) passed on March 14, 2007 by 333-93, including 104 Republicans. The Senate bill has broad bipartisan support, and cleared the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee by voice vote earlier this year.

We urge you to take a stand for accountability and join Senators Bingaman, Cornyn and others in co-sponsoring this important bill. The public should be assured that the next President will be committed to openness and will restore the public's trust in the workings of government.

Please feel free to contact Lee White at the National Coalition for History (202-544-2422 x-116) if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

American Association of Law Libraries

Association of American Publishers

American Booksellers Foundation for
Free Expression

Bill of Rights Defense Committee

American Library Association

California First Amendment Coalition

Center for National Security Studies

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington

EnviroJustice

Essential Information

FOI Oklahoma, Inc.

Government Accountability Project

Indiana Coalition for Open Government

The James Madison Project

Mine Safety and Health News

Minnesota Coalition on Government Information

National Coalition Against Censorship

National Coalition for History

National Freedom of Information Coalition

National Security Archive

OMB Watch

OpenTheGovernment.org

PEN American Center

Progressive Democrats of America

Public Citizen

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press

Society of American Archivists

Society of Professional Journalists

Special Libraries Association

Sprehe Information Management Associates, Inc.

Washington Coalition for Open Government

Cc: Senators Bingaman, Cornyn, Feinstein, Leahy, Lieberman, Obama, and Sununu