
Murphy Leads Good Government Debate on Floor of House of Representatives

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"One of the reasons people have lost faith in their government is because too many decisions in Washington are made behind closed doors. This bill will shed some important light on the influence that some people try to gain through donating to Presidential libraries," said Murphy.

The Presidential library system was created by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Roosevelt had the idea to create a repository to house his presidential papers for the benefit of future generations of Americans. Presidential libraries have been getting more expensive, as they often include various facilities in addition to a repository, such as museums, conference centers, or classrooms. The President George H.W. Bush library was reported to cost more than \$80 million to build. The President Clinton library and museum cost about \$165 million. News reports have indicated that the fundraising goal for President Bush's library and think tank in Texas is \$500 million.

This legislation requires Presidential library foundations to disclose the donations they receive during the term of the President and for four years after the end of the term, and it requires that this information be made available to the public.

"The problem is that many of these fundraising organizations are really just selling access to the President while he is still in office, when his power and celebrity are strongest. You don't need to be a political scientist to see that the potential for abuse is enormous," said Murphy.

He added, "This bill simply seeks to shed sunlight on the process. Many of us came to Congress to bring government out of the backrooms and into the open air. This bill is an important step in that transition."

Today the House will also debate and vote on legislation to strengthen protections for federal whistleblowers, to provide more timely disclosure of government documents by reforming the Freedom of Information Act, and to increase disclosure of Presidential records.