

OPENTHEBOOKS.COM ENCOURAGES PASSAGE OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS TRANSPARENCY ACT

Budget Reform, Oversight Task Force members demonstrate they understand sunlight is the best disinfectant, the watchdog said.

WASHINGTON - OpenTheBooks.com is applauding the introduction of [H.R. 8342, the Improper Payments Transparency Act](#), this week. The bipartisan legislation is the product of efforts by both the House Budget Reform Task Force Chair Rep. Rudy Yakym (R-Ind.) and the House Oversight Task Force Chair Rep. Jack Bergman (R-Mich.). The cosponsors are Reps. Jimmy Panetta (D-Calif.) and Scott Peters (D-Calif.).

The bill is focused on improving transparency to Congress and the public about where improper payments are happening - which agencies and offices have the biggest challenges - and what steps, if any, are being taken to cure the problem. The bill requires that the President's annual budget request include the following:

- A description of programs required to submit improper payment reports;
- A detailed explanation of why any improper payments occurred;
- Trends in improper payment amounts and rates over a three-year period;
- What corrective actions, including those outline in corrective action plans, agencies are undertaking regarding improper payments; and
- The status of those actions, including disclosure of programs and activities with incomplete actions.

In a letter of support submitted to the House Budget Committee, OpenTheBooks.com CEO Adam Andrzejewski said:

"We believe every wasted dollar harms taxpayers, fails a critical mission and erodes public trust in the federal government.

"Before that trust can be restored, it's critical that the government demonstrate it can fully quantify the problem and that agencies are in fact taking steps to minimize these instances of fraud, overpayment and other mistaken payments...."

"Support for Congress and federal employees to detect and prevent improper payments allows the government to communicate improvements to the public, and, over time, restore public trust in the use of tax revenue."



OpenTheBooks.com has long been in a leader and quantifying and reporting on improper payments. Since the Bush era (2004), the nonprofit [found](#) nearly \$3 trillion worth of improper payments - outstripping the entire GDPs of countries like France, Italy and Brazil.

During the nation's Covid response, improper payments skyrocketed to \$281 billion in 2021, as money was rushed into the economy. Some agencies just simply didn't count the mistakes in 2022. That year, OpenTheBooks.com calculated that improper payments totaled \$1,673 for every individual tax return filed that year (\$167,915,264 [according to the Internal Revenue Service](#)). That's \$846 for every man, woman and child in the country.

OpenTheBooks.com was joined by the Foundation for Government Accountability, Citizens Against Government Waste, Heritage Action, and more, in their support of the bill.

An additional bill, [H.R. 8343, the Enhancing Improper Payments Accountability Act](#), was introduced by Reps. Blake Moore (R-Utah) and Abigail Spanberger (D-Va.). That legislation would take payment integrity recommendations that the Government Accountability Office recommends for new federal programs and codify them into law. It would also require the President's budget request to detail programs that are required to report improper payments but fail to, and to explain what is keeping them from reporting. Committee markup is expected to begin this week on both bills.

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