

Dear House Law and Justice Committee members:

I strongly urge you to support House Bill 4766 of 2017. Transparency in Government is essential in order to prevent abuse of power, favoritism and secret deals by politicians. So long as the people are required to fund an organization, they are at-the-very-least entitled to know what it is doing.

Simply mandating open meetings, without consequences for non-compliance, or a means by which citizens may seek to rectify violations, is ineffective. Stipulating that attorney fees could be recovered for any judicial finding that the Open Meetings Act was violated, would be a meaningful improvement. It would be a strong incentive for compliance, and would make the investigation of the complaints and legal action affordable for the common Michigan resident.

Attorneys are less likely to pursue a matter if it is going to cause them personal expense, so they need to have a way to be compensated for their time, and if anyone must pay it should be those who violated the public trust.

Sincerely,

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PS: These are my personal thoughts, but transparency in government is a core value of *Our America Initiative*.