

# Proclamation of The People's Right to Open and Interactive Government

**We, the undersigned petitioners**, believe strongly that in order for our government to have the support of its citizens it must recognize the right of all citizens to have time to review and comment on legislation before it is voted on by the Congress or signed into law by the President. We believe, also, that it is only through a fruitful deliberative process, by way of vigorous and open discussion in the public sphere, that the laws of our nation can be enacted with complete legitimacy.

As our nation faces great challenges, it becomes more necessary for your ears to hear all voices and proposals, to ensure that our decisions are those which have been tested in the curing forge of our marketplace of ideas. Those voices cannot be heard when the legislative process has disenfranchised the public of access to information and a reasonable window of time in which to offer its aggregate opinion and advice. Although you have been elected to represent our interests in the legislative process, the process itself has accelerated beyond the speed that permits a healthy and informed debate.

**We believe that in a free republic there should be no legislation without proper deliberation.**

Paramount to expediency in our lawmaking is the need to preserve the government's legitimacy with those who will live under the laws it passes. We believe that there is nothing to fear from public debate and that, in fact, such an interchange is the vital element of the American system, the one that has made our form of government a framework for freedom-seeking people around the world.

**We believe that no legislation should be signed into law before it has been reviewed and deliberated in the public sphere.**

Therefore, we call upon the Congress to make rules for a "reading break" in the legislative process as follows:

**We call for the Congress to create permanent rules that, prior to bringing a resolution to the floor for a vote, a "reading break" of 72 hours must be observed.**

Americans value the notion of not signing contracts without first reading them. Congress is making agreements in the name of the American people and we demand that lawmakers have a reasonable opportunity to read and review them before committing the American people to their terms.

We also call upon President Barack Obama to follow-through on your campaign pledge for "Sunlight Before Signing", outlined in the "Blueprint for Change" (<http://www.barackobama.com/issues.ethics>).

**We call for the implementation by the President of his proposal for "Sunlight Before Signing." After receiving legislation from the Congress for the President's signature, the exact text of legislation will be published on the White House website for no less than 5 days before the President signs a bill into law.**

Every American citizen is a constituent of the President, and as such should be allowed an opportunity for informed interaction. Often this is the first opportunity for the public to review final legislation and is therefore the only time in which a robust dialogue between the President and the people can truly take place.

The American people, regardless of political affiliation, have, through our elections, bestowed upon you the enumerated powers of government as provided by our founding documents. There is nothing to fear by allowing the light of day to shine on our legislative process and enlighten our public thinking. We petition you to create a more lasting environment of cooperation with your constituents by implementing the actions outlined above.

We, the undersigned, humbly submit these requests to you, our elected leaders and will not wait patiently await action. The restoration of transparency in government is too important for our national survival to wait. We have seen how quickly the Congress and the White House can move on issues *they* feel are important. We now ask that those bodies take up issues that *We the People* feel are fundamental.

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