

April 2009 Docket Blurbs
Transparency and Integrity Fund
Docket total: \$3,275,000

Transparency of Information

Government Watchdogs:

Focus Project (d.b.a. OMB Watch)

Recommended Grant: \$500,000 over two years, general support (\$400,000 from TIF; \$100,000 from NSHR)

This recommended grant would support the ongoing efforts of OMB Watch to provide valuable oversight of the Federal government. OMB Watch plays an important role in the transparency/right to know community in Washington, leading coalitions relating to broad transparency goals, Bailout Watch, and the Coalition for an Accountable Recovery. The organization also conducts important work relating to administrative agencies and the regulatory state more generally.

Project on Government Oversight

Recommended Grant: \$500,000 over two years, general support (\$300,000 from TIF; \$200,000 from NSHR)

This recommended grant would support the ongoing efforts of POGO in its work to uncover government waste, fraud, and abuse. POGO's longstanding watchdog work relating to the Department of Defense and military is of particular importance to both TIF and NSHR, given that Department's massive expenditures and extensive reliance on privatization. POGO is an active collaborator with other OSI grantees such as the Sunlight Foundation and the Center for Public Integrity.

National Institute on Money in State Politics

Recommended Grant: \$400,000 over two years, general support

This recommended grant would provide support to NIMSP for its work related to collection, analysis, and dissemination of campaign finance data. NIMSP is the only organization in the nation that collects all campaign contribution data for every election in the country, including judicial elections. Their database serves as the foundation of much of the transparency technology developing today, most notably Maplight.org. NIMSP is also playing a major role in developing internet-based tools for monitoring the allocation of stimulus dollars by states around the nation.

Journalism and Media:

American Prospect

Recommended Grant: \$200,000 over one year, general support

The American Prospect was founded in 1990 as an authoritative magazine of liberal ideas, committed to a just society, an enriched democracy, and effective liberal politics. Founded as a quarterly journal by Robert Reich, Paul Starr, and Robert Kuttner in 1990, *The American Prospect* now publishes ten print issues a year and has a robust presence on the web. The *Prospect* has grown into a magazine with a paid circulation of more than 37,000, a special in-

depth report in most issues, and a daily Web magazine with more than 1 million unique monthly visitors.

Free Press

Recommended Grant: \$400,000 over two years, general support

Free Press is a national, nonpartisan organization working to reform the media. Through education, organizing and advocacy, Free Press promotes diverse and independent media ownership, strong public media, and universal access to communications. Free Press has also recently launched a new initiative on media policies that impact journalism.

New America Foundation

Recommended Grant: \$400,000 over two years, project support

This grant would support the Wireless Future Program, which aims to reclaim the public airwaves and to ensure open spectrum policies and wireless community broadband policies that serve the public interest as the nation transitions to a digital era. The program is working to reverse the ongoing trend, under the guise of "deregulation," toward privatization of the public airwaves and to expand citizen access to an unlicensed spectrum "commons," thereby facilitating nonprofit community wireless networks and unmediated wireless Internet access.

Public Knowledge

Recommended Grant: \$200,000 over two years, general support

Public Knowledge works to limit corporate control over the flow of information through policy advocacy, public education, and work with affected constituencies including artists, musicians, filmmakers, and college students. It seeks to accomplish this goal in two ways: 1) by working to reinstate the constitutional and historical balance of copyright law, within which creators and publishers receive limited monopoly rights in return for broad public rights of access and use; and 2) by promoting media and telecommunications policies that ensure open, accessible and interoperable media and telecommunications systems so as to permit the free flow of information and sharing essential to a democratic society.

Key Institutions for Government Accountability

Election Systems:

Rockefeller Family Fund

Recommended Grant: \$250,000 over one year, project support

This grant would support a campaign for voter registration modernization, via a pooled fund at the Rockefeller Family Fund. The goals are to secure, on the federal level: (1) Automatic Registration; (2) Permanent Registration; and (3) Election Day Correction. Campaign organizations include the American Association of Retired Persons, Brennan Center, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, National Military Family Association and others, who will be collectively undertaking research, outreach and organizing and communications and public education to develop and generate support for these policies.

Judiciary:

Judicial Independence:

N/a

Judicial Nominations:

Communications Consortium Media Center

Recommended Grant: \$150,000 over one year, project support

This renewal recommendation would support CCMC provision of communications support to smaller members of the Coalition for a Fair and Independent Judiciary. Over the past two years CCMC has traveled to states around the country to provide training sessions for local activists on designing local media strategies on nominations. CCMC has also provided communications support to smaller coalition members (such as grantees the National Coalition for Disability Rights and the National Congress of American Indians), assisting with op-ed drafting, and media placement in print and radio outlets. They would continue this work while also coordinating online communications efforts amongst the several members of the coalition.

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund

Recommended Grant: \$400,000 over one year, project support

The project grant would support LCCREF's leadership of the Coalition for a Fair and Independent Judiciary, the progressive coalition on federal judicial nominations. LCCREF would coordinate the Coalition's weekly meetings, organize and regrant to nominations coalitions in key states, and oversee communications efforts in Appeals Court and (potential) Supreme Court nominations over the coming year.

National Council of Jewish Women

Recommended Grant: \$175,000 over one year, project support

This recommended grant would be the first to NCJW, a chapter-based national organization of progressive Jewish women. Over the past eight years, NCJW has specifically organized Jewish women around judicial nominations and the impact of the Federal courts on concerns to that community. NCJW chapters were particularly active in key cities such as Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA, and; Portland, ME. Those chapters are now moving beyond the Jewish community to help organize and support diverse coalitions concerned with nominations. This grant would play an important role in shifting part of OSI judicial nominations funding away from DC-focused organizations towards groups organizing at the grassroots on these issues.