

**The original documents are located in Box 38, “9/13/76 - Remarks Upon the Signing of S.5:
The Government in the Sunshine Act” of the President’s Speeches and Statements:
Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SIGNED

SIGNING STATEMENT OF S.5,

THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE ACT

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1976

TODAY I SIGN INTO LAW S.5, THE "GOVERNMENT IN THE
SUNSHINE ACT."

I STRONGLY ENDORSE THE CONCEPT WHICH UNDERLIES THIS
LEGISLATION -- THAT THE DECISION-MAKING BUSINESS OF
REGULATORY AGENCIES MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

IN A DEMOCRACY THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW,
NOT ONLY WHAT ITS GOVERNMENT DECIDES, BUT WHY AND BY
WHAT PROCESS. TODAY, MANY CITIZENS FEEL THAT THEIR
GOVERNMENT IS TOO REMOTE -- THAT IT IS NOT RESPONSIVE
TO THEIR NEEDS.

THIS LEGISLATION SHOULD GO A LONG WAY IN REAFFIRMING THAT
GOVERNMENT EXISTS FOR THE PEOPLE -- NOT APART FROM THE
PEOPLE.

UNDER THIS NEW LAW, SOME 50 REGULATORY AGENCIES,
INCLUDING THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION, THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AND THE NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD
ARE REQUIRED TO GIVE ADVANCE NOTICE OF THEIR MEETINGS
AND THEN HOLD THOSE MEETINGS IN PUBLIC. IF AN AGENCY
VOTES TO CLOSE A SESSION FOR ONE OF THE SPECIFIC REASONS
SET FORTH IN THE LAW, VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS OF MOST SUCH
MEETINGS WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

THE LAW ALSO PROHIBITS ANY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN
AGENCY OFFICIALS AND OUTSIDE PERSONS HAVING AN INTEREST
IN MATTERS BEING CONSIDERED BEFORE A REGULATORY BODY.

FURTHERMORE, THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT HAS BEEN AMENDED
BY NARROWING THE AUTHORITY OF AGENCIES TO WITHHOLD
INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC.

THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE ACT IS IN KEEPING WITH
AMERICA'S PROUD HERITAGE THAT THE GOVERNMENT SERVES AND THE
PEOPLE RULE. THIS AFTERNOON, I SIGN THIS LEGISLATION TO
REAFFIRM THAT HERITAGE -- AND LET THE SUNSHINE IN.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT