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## **Governor Announces *Open Georgia:* *Transparency in Government Website***

**ATLANTA** - Governor Sonny Perdue announced today the launch of the *Open Georgia: Transparency in Government* website. The website can be found at [open.georgia.gov](http://open.georgia.gov). The site allows Georgians online access to agency expenditures on professional services, employee salaries and travel, state financial reports and program reviews from the two previous fiscal years.

“The Open Georgia website makes state government more transparent to its customer, the taxpayer,” Governor Perdue said. “By being willing to further open the halls of government to the public, we give citizens more confidence that their tax dollars are being spent wisely.”

There are numerous ways to search for salary and vendor information. Users can search by name, title, description and agency. The site allows Georgians to view professional service vendors doing business with the state and view how much they were paid during the two previous fiscal years. Once the information is accessed, it can be exported into Microsoft Excel or Adobe .pdf formats. Users with questions about the site are able to call the state’s main information phone number, 1-800-GEORGIA, to be directed to the appropriate agency contact.

The *Open Georgia* site is the result of Senate Bill 300, the Transparency in Government Act, sponsored by Senator Chip Rogers and Senator Chip Pearson. The bill, which was signed by Governor Perdue on May 12, 2008, called for the site to be operational in January 2009.

“This is a great day for Georgia taxpayers,” Senator Rogers said. “We have taken a major step towards fully open and easily accessible accounting of how every state tax dollar is spent. The very best way to prevent wasteful government spending is to let those paying the bills see exactly where their money is going.”

The website is maintained by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts. In 2010, it will be expanded to include grant and contract payments to vendors by state agencies.