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For Immediate Release

## **ATF APPLAUDS GOV. NEWSOM FOR SIGNING BILL ON TRUMP'S TAX RETURNS**

*Legislation Helps Restore Transparency to Presidential Elections*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Fairness today applauded California Gov. Gavin Newsom for signing a bill to require presidential and gubernatorial candidates to release five years of federal tax returns as a condition for appearing on the state's primary ballot.

Frank Clemente, executive director of Americans for Tax Fairness, said the bill is a step forward for transparency and openness in government, and the public's right to know. He said he hopes other states will follow California's lead and pass similar laws to require transparency from political candidates.

"This bill was necessary because President Donald Trump has departed from over four decades of established political tradition, respected by both Democrats and Republicans alike, by refusing to release his income tax returns," Clemente said. "He has denied voters the opportunity to fully evaluate his fitness for the office."

During the 2016 campaign, [Trump promised to release his taxes](#) once the IRS completed an audit. But after the election, Trump changed his mind and has gone to extraordinary lengths to prevent the release of his taxes, including [filing a lawsuit against the House Ways & Means Committee](#) to block release of his federal returns.

"Clearly, there is something in those tax returns he doesn't want the public to see," Clemente said. "We can only speculate that the tax returns will show he's not as wealthy as he claims, or that he has business and financial interests with other countries, including Russia, that could put him in conflict with his official duties. Or, as we have long suspected, his tax returns may show that he's used questionable loopholes and tax dodges to escape paying his fair share of taxes.

"Whatever the case, voters needed to know the truth before the 2016 election and they need to know it now before the 2020 campaign," he said. "The bill signed today by Gov. Newsom provides the transparency and accountability that voters deserve."

In testimony in support of the California bill's passage, ATF – which has more than 44,000 online activists and supporters in the state – Clemente wrote, “Transparency is – or should be – a nonpartisan issue. As we explain in our report, [The Case for Congress Obtaining Trump's Tax Returns](#), a presidential candidate's income tax returns provide voters with essential information regarding potential conflicts of interest, sources of income, domestic and international business dealings, financial status, and charitable donations. These are critical questions that voters deserve to have answered before an election, because unlike members of Congress and federal appointees, presidents are largely exempt from conflict-of-interest laws.”

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