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Monday, March 16, 2009

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MRFL SHINES LIGHT ON CARNAHAN DURING SUNSHINE WEEK

MRFL Demands Carnahan Ends the Stonewalling

St. Louis – March 16, 2009 – This week, Americans recognize the importance of open and transparent government by observing Sunshine Week. Unfortunately, Missourians do not have the same ability to shine the light of open, honest and fair government on the operations of Secretary of State Robin Carnahan's office. Instead of opening up her office to the public to show how she conducts the business of the people, Secretary Carnahan has chose to obstruct and delay any attempt by private individuals and groups such as the Missouri Roundtable For Life to understand how she performs her constitutional and statutory duties.

On February 9, 2009, Missouri Roundtable For Life (MRFL) filed a sunshine request with Secretary Carnahan for public records of her contacts with third-party groups such as the Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures and Planned Parenthood during the ballot writing process for MRFL's "Taxpayer Protection Amendment" filing. MRFL made this Sunshine request following the admission by a senior Carnahan staff member that someone in Carnahan's or Attorney General Koster's office had been in contact with third party special interests during the process of reviewing MRFL's "Taxpayer Protection Amendment" filing. Instead of quickly complying with MRFL's statutory records request without a fee, Secretary Carnahan demanded payment for records which are free under Missouri's Sunshine Law. MRFL subsequently filed four more Sunshine Records request which have been met with similar resistance from Secretary Carnahan's office.

"Secretary Carnahan has chosen to protect the private interests of her special-interest supporters and contributors over those of the public's right to an honest, open and transparent state government," said MRFL executive director Todd Jones. "At every step of the way, Carnahan has stalled and put up every roadblock she has at her disposal to hide her backroom dealings and practices in how she lets third party special interest groups like Planned Parenthood play such an active and unseemly role in the ballot language writing process."

Today, during a week of open and transparent government, Missouri Roundtable for Life calls on Secretary Carnahan to follow not only the letter of the law, but also the spirit of the Sunshine Act. Missouri deserves better.

To learn more about the Missouri Roundtable for Life, please visit www.moroundtable.org.

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