



*Enhancing **access** to government information  
Ensuring **transparency** of government operations  
Promoting **civic engagement***

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## **Coalition President Discussed D.C. FOIA at Symposium**

D.C. Open Government Coalition founder and president Thomas Susman represented the Coalition on Friday, February 26th, at a University of the District of Columbia Law Review symposium on a panel exploring executive branch compliance with the District's Freedom of Information Act. At the symposium lunch, Councilmember Mary Cheh (Ward 3) was guest speaker and announced that she would soon be introducing open government legislation.

On the panel, Mr. Susman described many of the problems that have been reported to the D.C. Open Government Coalition, and suggested that the administration focus on leadership and culture change within the bureaucracy to promote greater transparency. Thorn Pozen, Special Counsel in the Office of the Attorney General, presented the District's view, conceding that there are problems with FOIA implementation but pointing to the generally good statistics from their yearly reports and to the vast amount of data available in numerous places on the city's website. He also described an anticipated FOIA tracking system as evidence of their efforts to improve. Margaret Kwoka, an attorney with Public Citizen Litigation Group, provided thoughts on legislative changes that would improve the law and make it more requester-friendly.

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