Lawmakers in Maine supported Sunshine Week and reaffirmed their commitment to open government with proclamations, resolutions and opinion pieces. The official state Web site also posted information about Sunshine Week on its Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) page, which sports the Sunshine Week logo. Governor John E. Baldacci signed a proclamation declaring March 12-18, 2006 as “Sunshine Week: Your Right to Know” throughout the state, and penned an opinion column published by the Lewiston Sun-Journal. The state legislature marked Sunshine Week with a joint resolution recognizing the importance of open government and affirming its principles.

Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack proclaimed March 12-18 to be “Sunshine Week” in Iowa. The proclamation was requested by The Associated Press as part of the news cooperative’s efforts to bring attention to open government issues. The proclamation read, in part, that “the terror-ridden and despotic regimes around the world have shown that democracy cannot flourish when the public’s right to know is compromised.” The signing by the governor during a brief ceremony March 9 was attended by Carol Ann Riha, AP Iowa chief of bureau, and Mike Glover, AP political writer.
The Los Angeles Fire Department News & Information blog during Sunshine Week reminded readers of “the importance of all Americans to become active in guiding the workings of their local, regional, state and federal agencies – and that includes the Los Angeles Fire Department.”

The LAFD blog didn’t stop at a civics lesson, however. It included links and phone numbers to key city agencies and government offices; it linked to posts for meetings and agendas, press releases and government calendars. Spokesman Brian Humphrey said Sunshine Week is a great time to remember that “public information does not belong to the news media any more than it belongs to us [government officers]; it belongs to the public.”

Missouri Attorney General Jay Nixon reaffirmed his commitment to open government in a Sunshine Week statement: “As much as possible, the officeholders, boards, agencies and organizations that are covered by the Sunshine Law must keep public business public. My office has taken an active role to ensure compliance with the Sunshine Law. We educate, mediate and, if necessary, litigate.” In addition to holding training sessions for public officials around the state, Nixon’s office produced a 76-page booklet on the state’s Sunshine Law that is available free in print or online.
San Diego (Calif.) Mayor Jerry Sanders and City Councilwoman Donna Frye weighed in on Sunshine Week, open government and the importance of both in a column published by The San Diego Union-Tribune: “During the recent mayoral election, we both recognized that many of our city’s problems were made worse by a culture of secrecy that existed within our city government.” Citing several legal and process changes to make government more open and accessible, they promised, “We are committed to working together to make city government open, accessible and transparent to the people of San Diego, not just during Sunshine Week, but every week of the year.”

Texas State Senator Jeff Wentworth wrote an opinion column published by the Dripping Springs Century News and several other newspapers around the state after Sunshine Week, urging that the spirit of Sunshine Week continue all year. “I am happy to see that public officials are responding [to the state’s required open government training] in such a positive manner. To ensure that state government is open to all Texans, I encourage every public official to follow the law and take the required courses so they may better understand their responsibilities and respond appropriately and in a timely manner.”