



November 9, 2005

The Hon. Doc Hastings, Chairman
The Hon. Alan Mollohan, Ranking Member
Committee on Standards of Official Conduct
HT-2 Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hastings and Ranking Member Mollohan:

Common Cause urges the Committee on Official Standards of Conduct to include in its investigation of Representative Tom DeLay (R-TX) recent evidence that indicates Representative DeLay asked lobbyist Jack Abramoff to raise money for him through a private charity controlled by Abramoff.

Newly disclosed e-mails from the lobbyist's files, which refer to "Tom" and "Tom's requests" and "Leadership is asking," show that Representative DeLay asked Abramoff to raise money for Representative DeLay through a charity Abramoff controlled called Capital Athletic Foundation. It is reasonable to assume that Representative DeLay hoped to use this money for political purposes.

"Did you get the message from the guys that Tom wants us to raise some bucks from Capital Athletic Foundation?" wrote Abramoff to Tony Rudy, Representative DeLay's former chief of staff who then worked for Abramoff. "I have six clients in for \$25K. I recommend we hit everyone who cares about Tom's requests. I have another few to hit still."

In an email exchange between Rudy and another colleague at their lobbying firm, Greenberg Traurig, Rudy wrote: "If you have to say Leadership is asking, please do. I already have."

In another email, Abramoff said it would be good "if we can do \$200K" for Representative DeLay.

If Representative DeLay solicited money from Abramoff, it would appear to violate 5 U.S.C. § 7353, which states:

Except as permitted by [applicable gift rules or regulations], no Member of Congress or officer or employee of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch shall solicit or accept anything of value from a person –

Derek Bok
Chairman

Chellie Pingree
President and CEO

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John Gardner
Founding Chairman



(1) seeking official action from, doing business with, or ... conducting activities regulated by, the individual's employing agency; or (2) whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the individual's official duties.

Moreover, if Representative DeLay made the request to Abramoff in connection with his decision to provide Abramoff with legislative assistance in his capacity as majority leader, it would violate Clause 3 of House Rule XXIII, which states:

A Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House may not receive compensation and may not permit compensation to accrue to his beneficial interest from any source, the receipt of which would occur by virtue of influence improperly exerted from his position in the Congress.

Representative DeLay has had a long relationship with Abramoff. There are numerous reports about possible ethics violations that have grown out of this relationship. It is incumbent on the Ethics Committee to conduct a thorough investigation of the ties between Abramoff and Representative DeLay, including this latest evidence produced by the Senate Indian Affairs Committee investigation.

We further urge you to make public your findings in this matter, and to provide appropriate guidance to Members to ensure that improper and unethical practices of this nature do not occur.

We would appreciate a reply to this request at your earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,

Chellie Pingree
President

cc: Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL)
Representative Lamar Smith (R-TX)
Representative Melissa Hart (R-PA)
Representative Tom Cole (R-OK)
Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH)
Representative Gene Green (D-TX)
Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA)
Representative Michael F. Doyle (D-PA)