

 CREW - citizens for responsibility and ethics in washington

CREW Cuts

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CREW Files Senate Ethics Complaint Against Senator Craig, Asks Why Senators Stevens and Vitter are not Held to the Same Standard

On August 28th, CREW filed a complaint with the Senate ethics committee against Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) asking for an investigation into whether the senator, by attempting to engage an undercover officer in sexual activity in a Minneapolis airport restroom, violated senate rules prohibiting "improper conduct which reflects upon the Senate." Shortly thereafter, the Senate Republican leadership echoed CREW's call.

On September 1, 2007, Republican leaders forced Craig to resign as a result of the scandal, but remained silent in the face of Sen. David Vitter's (R-LA) similar misconduct. In July, Sen. Vitter admitted to the crime of soliciting a prostitute, but has received support rather than condemnation from his Republican colleagues. Although CREW also filed an ethics complaint against Sen. Vitter, but the Senate Select Committee on Ethics has not acted on it.

CREW also wonders why Senate Republicans who were so quick to disassociate themselves from Craig have remained supportive of Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK), who last month had his house raided by the FBI in the course of a bribery investigation. Because of the ongoing criminal investigation, CREW called for Sen. Stevens to step down from his position on the Appropriations Committee, where he controls the Department of Justice's budget. The Republican conference demurred.

For consistency's sake, Senators Stevens and Vitter should both be subject to ethics committee investigations and forced to give up their committee assignments pending the outcome of those investigations.

[Read CREW's statement on Sen. Craig's resignation](#)

[Read CREW's complaint against Sen. Craig](#)

[Read CREW's call for Sen. Stevens to step down](#)

[Read CREW's complaint against Sen. Vitter](#)

[Read the New Orleans Times-Picayune story](#)

White House Office of Administration Claims it is no Longer Subject to FOIA

In response to a suit brought by CREW seeking record-keeping documents relating to the over five million email lost from White House servers, the Office of Administration (OA) has claimed that it is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

CREW Executive Director Melanie Sloan said, "One has to wonder if this is an effort by the White House to keep secret the details of how millions of White House email suddenly went missing."

In the past, the OA has processed hundreds of FOIA requests from other non-profit groups and the media. The White House's own website had contradicted the OA's claim that it is not subject to FOIA. Evidence that the OA is subject to FOIA requests previously could be found here and here and here and here on the White House website and on the Department of Justice site here.

As a result of the press attention to CREW's lawsuit, sometime over Labor Day weekend, the White House revised its website, removing all references to the OA as an agency subject to the FOIA.

[Read CREW's opposition brief in the case against the OA](#)

[View before and after pictures of the White House website on CREW's blog](#)

[Read the The Washington Post story](#)

FEC Fines Empower Illinois Media Fund in Response to CREW Complaint

On August 15th, nearly three years after CREW filed a complaint, the Federal Election Commission found that the 527 organization Empower Illinois Media Fund (EIMF) violated the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) by running advertisements in the 2004 Illinois Senate race urging citizens to vote against Barack Obama. The FEC found that EIMF illegally failed to register as a political committee and knowingly accepted individual contributions of over \$5,000. The FEC fined EIMF \$3,000 and ordered it to file reports for the period of August 20, 2004 through December 31, 2006.

This decision is legally significant because it is the first time that the FEC has determined that a 527 that operated a web site that distributed information critical of a federal candidate's record could be required to register as a political committee. In other words, this decision may require any organization that raises funds specifically to establish and operate a web site that disseminates information critical of a federal candidate's record to register as a political committee and be subject to the FECA.

[Read more](#)

[Read The Politico story](#)

CREW Files DOJ Complaint Against Minority Leader Boehner for Alleged Illegal Leak of Classified Information

On August 6th, CREW filed a complaint with the Department of Justice asking that the Counterespionage Section of the National Security Division initiate an investigation into whether House Minority Leader John A. Boehner (R-OH) violated the law by leaking classified information.

In a July 31, 2007 interview with Fox News anchor Neil Cavuto, Rep. Boehner disclosed an aspect of a Federal Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court's decision regarding warrantless wiretapping, stating: "There's been a ruling, over the last four or five months, that prohibits the ability of our intelligence services and our counterintelligence people from listening in to two terrorists in other parts of the world where the communication could come through the United States."

Rep. Boehner apparently made his remarks to Mr. Cavuto in an effort to blame Democrats for failing to pass legislation overriding the FISA court's decision. Nevertheless, by telling a reporter that a FISA court has restricted the U.S. intelligence community's surveillance of suspected terrorists overseas, Rep. Boehner appears to have illegally transmitted information relating to the nation defense.

[Read CREW's complaint](#)

[Read the Dayton Daily News story](#)

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