



# CREW Cuts

The Monthly Newsletter of CREW

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[CREW Files FEC Complaint Against Sen. Landrieu Over Campaign's Mysterious "Donation" to Treasury](#)

[CREW Launches UnderInvestigation.org - A Comprehensive Look at Members of Congress Who Are Likely Under Investigation](#)

## Spotlight



### Melanie Sloan Discusses Fallout from Sen. Ensign's Affair on ABC News' Nightline

On November 23rd, CREW's executive director Melanie Sloan appeared on ABC News' *Nightline* in a segment in which Doug Hampton opened up about Sen. John Ensign's (R-NV) affair with his wife. Ms. Sloan discussed the ethics and legal issues surrounding Sen. Ensign's deplorable conduct.

[Click here to watch a clip of Ms. Sloan's comments.](#)

[Please donate to CREW today](#) to help hold public officials accountable for their unethical - and sometimes illegal - actions.

Watch the entire segment on ABCNews.com [here \(part 1\)](#) and [here \(part 2\)](#).



## CREW Requests Investigation of Rep. Bachmann After Anti-Health Care Bill Rally at Capitol



On November 17th, CREW sent a letter to the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) asking for an investigation into whether Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN) violated House rules by using her congressional web site to organize an



anti-health care reform rally at the U.S. Capitol.

Official House rules explicitly prohibit using a member's taxpayer-funded congressional website for "grassroots lobbying or [to] solicit support for a Member's position." Rep. Bachmann blatantly violated this rule, using her website to urge supporters to flock to the Capitol to rally and "tell their Representatives to vote no" on pending health care legislation in the House.

CREW also asked the OCE to investigate whether the rally was falsely billed as a "press conference" to avoid legal trouble for failing to obtain a demonstration permit. Republican staff members were apparently told to make sure their bosses did "not term this event as a rally," though no questions were asked by

any member of the media. By definition, press conferences call for questions from the press.

Rep. Bachmann has recklessly disregarded official House rules and the OCE must investigate her misconduct.

[Learn more](#)

[Read CREW's letter to the OCE](#) and the [accompanying exhibits](#)

[Read the Associated Press article](#)

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## CREW Calls for Investigation into Wall Street Firms Getting H1N1 Vaccines Ahead of Those Who Need It Most



On November 5th, CREW called on Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to investigate reports of Wall Street firms receiving H1N1 flu vaccines at a time when tens of millions of Americans are suffering from a nationwide vaccine shortage. CREW followed up its letter to Secretary Sebelius by sending Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to HHS and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for documents describing official vaccine distribution policies.

First reported in [BusinessWeek](#), 13 companies received doses of the vaccine, including Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase and Time Warner. As of November 4th, the CDC reported that for the 159 million people at highest risk, there were only 32.3 million doses of the

vaccine available. "Highest risk" individuals include pregnant women, infants, children and health and emergency services personnel - hardly the demographic makeup of big Wall Street firms.

Accounts of vaccine shortages have come in from all parts of the country: Los Angeles County's three public hospitals ordered 110,000 vaccines, but received only 18,000. Alabama's Department of Public Health reported 62% of state-ordered vaccines will not be available until after December 1st. A county in Minnesota has said it is only expecting 7,800 vaccine doses for more than 20,000 children.

The government has responded to the public outcry by saying distributing vaccines to large corporations is standard practice - but following "standard practice" is no excuse for bungling a critical and extraordinary situation. The CDC has refused to expedite CREW's FOIA request for records, while HHS has said CREW's request should be directed at the CDC alone.

The government's handling of the vaccine's distribution has been tragic at best. HHS and the CDC must explain their policies and work towards reform - to avoid another disaster like this in the future.

[Learn more about CREW's letter to Secretary Sebelius](#)

[Learn more about CREW's FOIA requests](#) and the [CDC's response](#)

[Read the \*BusinessWeek\* story](#)

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## CREW Files FEC Complaint Against Sen. Landrieu Over Campaign's Mysterious "Donation" to Treasury



On November 20th, CREW filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) against Sen. Mary Landrieu's (D-LA) campaign committee over a mysterious "donation" the committee made to the U.S. Treasury last year.

FEC records show that on August 7, 2008, Sen. Landrieu's campaign committee donated \$25,300 to the Treasury. While it's likely the campaign discovered it had accepted illegal contributions and made efforts to return them, Sen. Landrieu's campaign has repeatedly refused to explain the circumstances surrounding the donation.

Sen. Landrieu may not be talking, but federal campaign finance law is clear: the only time illegal campaign contributions can be donated to the Treasury, rather than returned to the original donor, is when that donor is under a Justice Department investigation, indictment, or has been convicted for making illegal contributions.

Sen. Landrieu should explain the circumstances behind her mysterious \$25,300 contribution to the Treasury.

[Learn more](#)

[Read CREW's FEC complaint](#)

[Read the \*TPM Muckraker\* story](#)

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## CREW Launches [UnderInvestigation.org](#) - A Comprehensive Look at Members of Congress Who Are Likely Under Investigation



On November 13th, CREW launched [UnderInvestigation.org](#) - a comprehensive list of members of congress who are likely facing Justice Department or congressional ethics investigations.

The site currently profiles 17 representatives and three senators, providing information on each member's current investigation status, background, and the government body conducting the inquiry. New information is added to the site as it becomes available, but can only be compiled from press reports due to the secrecy surrounding these investigations.

[UnderInvestigation.org](#) is a great tool for journalists and activists seeking to hold members of Congress accountable for their actions. Check back often for the latest information on which elected officials are potentially facing investigations for their unethical conduct.

[Click here to visit UnderInvestigation.org.](#)

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