

CREW Cuts

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Spotlight



CREW's Executive Director Melanie Sloan Featured in Upcoming Jack Abramoff Documentary, *Casino Jack and the United States of Money*

CREW's Executive Director Melanie Sloan is featured in Oscar-winning director Alex Gibney's upcoming documentary, *Casino Jack and the United States of Money*: an in-depth look at disgraced former lobbyist Jack Abramoff's web of corruption that ensnared lobbyists, Hill staffers and members of Congress.

Ms. Sloan provides insightful commentary on both Mr. Abramoff's massive bribery and corruption schemes that dominated D.C. for years and the huge influence that money in politics still has over our elected leaders today.

Casino Jack is set for wide release on May 7th - check it out to learn the inside story of one of Washington's darkest chapters.

[Click here to learn more about the film](#)

[Click here to donate to CREW today](#)



CREW Files Ethics Complaints against C Street House Residents



On April 1st, CREW filed complaints with the Senate Ethics Committee and the House Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) urging investigations into whether members of Congress who currently live or have previously lived at the C Street House on Capitol Hill have violated congressional gift rules by paying below market value rent.

CREW's complaints name Sens. Sam Brownback (R-KS), Tom Coburn (R-OK), Jim DeMint (R-SC) and John Ensign (R-NV); and Reps. Mike Doyle (D-PA), Jerry Moran (R-KS), Heath Shuler (D-NC), Bart Stupak (D-MI) and Zach Wamp (R-TN) as current and former C Street House residents. [Press accounts](#) have claimed these congressmen pay only \$950 per month in rent - well below the neighborhood's normal range, which runs from \$1,700 to \$4,000 per month for accommodations that include housekeeping services.

By accepting the reduced rent rate at the house, which is run by a corporate arm of the shadowy Fellowship Foundation, these members of Congress are violating congressional rules prohibiting members from accepting gifts.

While many Americans are losing their homes during this time of economic turmoil, it appears these members of Congress are receiving an extraordinary deal on their luxurious accommodations. The ethics committees must investigate this blatant violation of congressional rules.

[Learn more](#)

[Read the Senate Ethics](#) and [OCE complaints](#)

[Read the Huffington Post story](#)

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CREW Releases "Worst Governors" Report - 11 Governors Who Champion Their Personal Interests Over Their States'



On April 21st, CREW released its first-ever *Worst Governors* report and the report's tandem website, www.WorstGovernors.org. The report profiles 11 governors who have championed their cronies and bank accounts over their states' best interests.

Unranked, the 11 worst governors are:

- ◆ [Gov. Haley Barbour](#) (R-MS);
- ◆ [Gov. Donald Carcieri](#) (R-RI);
- ◆ [Gov. Jim Gibbons](#) (R-NV);
- ◆ [Gov. Bobby Jindal](#) (R-LA);
- ◆ [Gov. David Paterson](#) (D-NY);
- ◆ [Gov. Sonny Perdue](#) (R-GA);
- ◆ [Gov. Rick Perry](#) (R-TX);
- ◆ [Gov. Bill Richardson](#) (D-NM);

- ◆ [Gov. Mike Rounds](#) (R-SD);
- ◆ [Gov. Mark Sanford](#) (R-SC); and
- ◆ [Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger](#) (R-CA).

The report also includes CREW's [Worst Governors Index](#), a *Harper's Index*-style collection of outrageous governors statistics. Highlights include Gov. Perdue's \$2,400 private plane ride to a NASCAR race 30 miles away, Gov. Gibbons' 867 state-billed text messages sent to his "alleged" mistress over six weeks in 2007 and Gov. Perry's minimum 17 former aides-turned-lobbyists.

Our elected leaders - whether at the state or federal level - too often focus on what is best for the favored few rather than on improving the lives of those they govern. We deserve, and must demand, better from those we vote into office.

[Visit www.WorstGovernors.org to learn more](http://www.WorstGovernors.org)

[Read CREW's full report](#) and [the Worst Governors Index](#)

[Read the Mother Jones story](#)

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CREW Files FEC Complaint over Illegal Contributions to Sen. David Vitter's Campaign Committee



On April 22nd, CREW and Louisiana citizen Wayne Jerry Phillips filed a Federal Election Commission (FEC) complaint against U.S. Dry Cleaning Corporation (USDC), Sen. David Vitter (R-LA) and the senator's campaign committee.

During a fundraising event in the summer of 2009, employees of the California-based USDC and their spouses donated \$38,400 to Sen. Vitter's campaign committee with the aim of persuading the senator to help the corporation obtain stimulus funds. These donations were made and accepted despite the fact that campaign finance law strictly prohibits corporations from

making contributions to federal candidates. Additionally, four of USDC's employees were reimbursed for their donations, and these reimbursements constitute illegal conduit contributions.

The FEC must determine the extent of USDC's campaign finance law violations and whether Sen. Vitter accepted these donations knowingly.

[Learn more](#)

[Read CREW's FEC complaint](#)

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

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Senate Ethics Committee Refuses to Act on CREW's Complaint Against Secret Holds



On April 9th, in a frustrating display of congressional inaction, the Senate Ethics Committee dismissed CREW's [December 2009 complaint](#) against senators' brazenly-illicit use of "secret holds" to stall or stop legislation and nomination hearings.



Despite being banned in 2007 by the Senate-enacted Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (HLOGA), the use of anonymously-filed secret holds remains rampant. Before filing its complaint, CREW conducted a review of the Senate Calendar of Business for the 2 years after HLOGA was passed and found only two notices of "intent to object" as required by the Act.

CREW asked the Senate Ethics Committee to look into senators' blatant disregard for their own rules, but in its letter dismissing the complaint, the Committee stated that investigating violations of the ban is outside of its jurisdiction. With no enforcement mechanism and brash and numerous violations, it is clear the "ban" on secret holds under HLOGA was no more than a political sham.

[Learn more about CREW's call for an ethics investigation into the use of secret holds](#)

[Read the Senate Ethics Committee's letter to CREW](#)

[Read *The Hill* editorial](#)

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