

## CREW Cuts

The Monthly Newsletter of CREW

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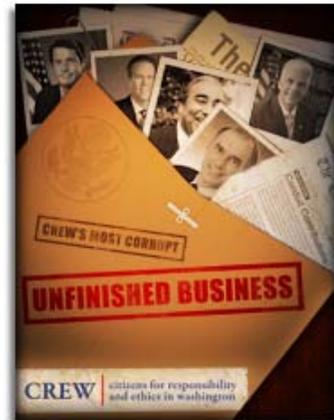
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### Spotlight

#### House and Senate Ethics Committees Protecting the Most Corrupt Members of Congress



Ethical lapses seem to be the only bipartisan activity in Washington these days.

Disappointingly, the two committees charged with holding members accountable for their behavioral faux pas instead only enable them.

As a result, CREW released the *2010 Most Corrupt Report: Unfinished Business*, highlighting the fact that the two ethics committees have failed to take action against at least 26 members who CREW has named in past Most Corrupt reports.

Unfortunately, the 112th Congress will include at least 23 of these lawmakers. Further, in the House, leaders from both parties are talking about gutting, or eliminating entirely, the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE). That's the nonpartisan body charged with doing the job the House Ethics Committee refuses to do.

Meanwhile in the Senate, there is nothing like the OCE, and senators have no intention of creating one. As a result, Senator John Ensign (R-NV) continues to serve despite his deplorable conduct, as does newly reelected Senator David Vitter (R-LA).

When the 112th Congress comes into session in January, a top priority should be a stronger ethics process, not a weaker one. We need a Congress that the American people can trust.

[Learn more.](#)

[Click here to see the Most Corrupt Members of Congress.](#)

[Click here to read the report \[PDF\].](#)



## CREW Exposes Florida Woman Buying Elections in the Northeast



The end of the election should bring a respite from the barrage of ads that saturated our televisions and radios over the past few weeks. But unless Congress does something about the disastrous *Citizens United* decision (like pass the DISCLOSE Act), the 2012 cycle promises to be even worse.

Instead of waiting for Congress to do the right thing - which is like waiting for Godot - CREW is on the offensive. We've launched an extensive investigation to uncover and expose the donors funding the shadowy groups behind the ads.

CREW found wealthy Florida resident Parker Collier has provided funding for Revere America, which more aptly would be called Revere Pataki, as the former New York governor is its front man. The group spent over a million dollars on ads in New York and New Hampshire this election cycle. Coincidentally, Mr. Pataki is rumored to be eyeing a run for president in 2012 when the nation's first primary will be held in New Hampshire.

We're not done, but we need your help. Do you know something that might help shed light on who's behind a mysterious group with a benevolent name, but venomous message? Tell us about it.

[Click here to submit an anonymous tip to CREW.](#)

[Watch Melanie Sloan's video message about how you can help expose elections influence.](#)

[Click here to read Melanie Sloan in \*The Huffington Post\*.](#)

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## Earmark Reform: A Bridge to Somewhere



While nearly everyone is familiar with the infamous [Bridge to Nowhere](#), fewer have heard about its cousin, the [Boat to Nowhere](#), which would have provided a ferry to connect several small Alaska towns with the regional hub of Homer, though two passenger ferries, a state-operated ferry, several water taxis, and air taxis already covered the route. Both projects are sorry examples of taxpayer money being funneled into projects with questionable benefits.

While politicians from both ends of the spectrum rail against the evils of earmarks on the campaign trail, here in Washington solutions have been in short supply. Facing continued congressional inaction, CREW joined with other government reform groups and lobbyists to tackle this issue. The coalition is proposing five commonsense principles that, if adopted, would allow for a more honest and transparent earmarking process.

When lawmakers are accountable for their earmarks, and the public has access to all of the information behind them, it's a victory for everyone.

[Click here to read the five proposed earmark reform principles.](#) [PDF]

[Click here to read Melanie's article in \*The Hill\* about earmark reforms.](#)

[Click here to watch video coverage of the Capitol Hill event on C-SPAN.](#)

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## Tom Delay: A Date with Texas Justice?



Tom DeLay is finally facing a jury of his peers, charged with money laundering in Texas. As his



trial gets underway, CREW continues to wonder why the Hammer never faced federal charges for routinely selling legislative action to the highest bidder.

To find out why the Department of Justice dropped the case, CREW filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for records regarding the DeLay investigation. After all, if Tom DeLay ♦ the poster child for congressional corruption ♦ can get away with brazenly selling his influence to [Jack Abramoff](#), what crimes *would* be serious enough for the Justice Department to prosecute? Stay tuned as CREW learns more♦

[Learn more.](#)

[Click here to read CREW♦s FOIA request to the Department of Justice.](#) [PDF]

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## CREW to IRS: Enforce Laws Against Tax-Exempt Groups Participating in Partisan Politics



Last week, CREW called on the IRS to investigate voter guides/legislative scorecards distributed by the Colorado-based Pray in Jesus Name Project. The so-called "Shock and Awe Free Voter Guides"♦ rate members of Congress as ♦anti-Jesus♦ or ♦faith friendly,♦ and were sent to churches in all 50 states. Because churches are prohibited from engaging in partisan politics, they might violate their tax-exempt status by distributing these guides.

If calling some politicians ♦anti-Jesus♦ isn♦t enough to demonstrate the group♦s bias, the fact that two Republican senators involved in sex scandals, Sens. David Vitter and John Ensign, were rated as 100% "faith friendly"♦ certainly is!

[Learn more.](#)

[Click here to read CREW♦s letter to the IRS.](#) [PDF]

[Click here to read an article about CREW♦s call for investigation in \*The Hill\*.](#)

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Americans deserve elected officials who focus on our interests rather than their own. Keeping politicians honest and building a better Washington won't be easy, which is why CREW needs your help. Please forward this to your friends and family to help spread the word about the hard work CREW is doing in Washington. Also, be sure to stay up to date by visiting our website, [www.citizensforethics.org](http://www.citizensforethics.org).

Thank you for your continued support.

Melanie Sloan  
Executive Director  
CREW



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