



The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

July 31, 2007

Dear Leader McConnell:

I'm writing to request that you ask Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) to temporarily recuse himself from his committee assignments until the federal criminal investigation into his activities has been resolved.

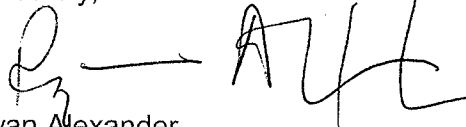
Under Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH), House Republican leadership have created a precedent of self-policing by asking lawmakers under federal investigation to leave their committee assignments until the investigation is completed, particularly after a search warrant has been executed on their home or business. By urging Rep. Rick Renzi (R-AZ) and Rep. John Doolittle (R-CA) to leave their committee assignments, Leader Boehner drew a proverbial ethics line in the sand that he will not cross. Now that a search warrant has been issued and executed in his home, it is time for Senator Stevens to do the right thing and step down from his committee assignments.

We don't make this request lightly. Senator Stevens has served the people of Alaska in the Senate for 37 years. Like every target of a federal investigation or criminal defendant, Senator Stevens is entitled to due process and remains innocent until proven otherwise. But the standard for holding a powerful committee position should not hinge on the absence of a criminal conviction. Even the appearance of using public office for personal profit undermines public confidence in Congress. A judicial finding of probable cause that a search of the Senator's home would produce evidence of a crime certainly has the effect of harming the public trust.

There is growing evidence that Senator Stevens may have used his powerful perch on the appropriations committee to direct tens of millions of dollars of earmarks to benefit family, friends, business partners and former staff. We think you would agree that the use of public office for personal profit in any way, shape, or form cannot be condoned. Indecisiveness will harm the public trust and current Senate efforts on ethics reform. The Senate needs to take decisive action to show taxpayers that self-dealing will not be tolerated.

Thank you for your attention on this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Ryan Alexander  
President