

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 228

Raising a question of the privileges of the House.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 2009

Mr. FLAKE submitted the following resolution; which was laid on the table

RESOLUTION

Raising a question of the privileges of the House.

Whereas The Hill reported on February 10, 2009, that “a top defense-lobbying firm” that “specializes in obtaining earmarks in the defense budget for a long list of clients” was “recently raided by the FBI.”;

Whereas the Associated Press reported on February 25, 2009 that the “FBI searched the lobbying firm . . . and the residence of its founder”;

Whereas The Hill reported on March 4, 2009, that the firm “has given \$3.4 million to 284 Members of Congress”;

Whereas Politico reported on February 13, 2009, that “federal investigators are asking about thousands of dollars in campaign contributions to lawmakers as part of an effort to determine whether they were illegal ‘straw man’ donations.”;

Whereas Roll Call reported on February 20, 2009, that they have “located tens of thousands of dollars worth of [the raided firm]-linked donations that are improperly reported in the FEC database.”;

Whereas Roll Call also reported that “tracking Federal Election Commission records of campaign donations attributed to [the firm] is a comedy of errors, misinformation and mysteries, providing more questions than answers about how much money the lobbying firm actually raised for Congressional campaigns.”;

Whereas CQ Today reported on February 19, 2009, that “104 House members got earmarks for projects sought by [clients of the firm] in the 2008 defense appropriations bills,” and that 87 percent of this bipartisan group of Members received campaign contributions from the raided firm;

Whereas The Hill reported on February 10, 2009, that in 2008 clients of this firm had “received \$299 million worth of earmarks, according to Taxpayers for Common Sense.”;

Whereas The Hill reported on February 23, 2009, that “clients of a defense lobby shop under investigation are continuing to score earmarks from their patrons in Congress, despite the firm being on the verge of shutting its doors permanently” and that several of the firm’s clients “are slated to receive earmarks worth at least \$8 million in the omnibus spending bill funding the federal government through the rest of fiscal 2009”;

Whereas the Washington Post reported on June 13, 2008, in a story describing increased earmark spending in the House version of the fiscal year 2009 defense authoriza-

tion bill that “many of the earmarks serve as no-bid contracts for the recipients.”;

Whereas the Associated Press reported on February 25, 2009, that “the Justice Department’s fraud section is overseeing an investigation into whether [the firm] reimbursed some employees for campaign contributions to members of Congress who requested the projects.”;

Whereas Politico reported on February 12, 2009, that “several sources said FBI agents have spent months laying the groundwork for their current investigation, including conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions.”;

Whereas House Resolution 189, instructing the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to investigate the relationship between earmark requests already made by Members and the source and timing of past campaign contributions, was considered as a privileged matter on February 25, 2009, and the motion to table the measure was agreed to by recorded vote of 226 to 182 with 12 Members voting present;

Whereas House Resolution 212, instructing the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to investigate the relationship between earmark requests already made by Members on behalf of clients of the raided firm and the source and timing of past campaign contributions, was considered as a privileged matter on March 3, 2009, and the motion to table the measure was agreed to by recorded vote of 222 to 181 with 14 Members voting present;

Whereas the reportedly fraudulent nature of campaign contributions originating from the raided firm, as well as re-

ports of the Justice Department conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions, raise concern about the integrity of congressional proceedings and the dignity of the institution; and

Whereas the fact that cases are being investigated by the Justice Department does not preclude the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct from taking investigative steps: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That (a) the Committee on Standards of
2 Official Conduct, or an investigative subcommittee of the
3 committee established jointly by the chair and ranking mi-
4 nority member, shall immediately begin an investigation
5 into the relationship between earmark requests for fiscal
6 year 2009 already made by Members on behalf of clients
7 of the raided firm and the source and timing of past cam-
8 paign contributions related to such requests.

9 (b) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct
10 shall submit a report of its findings to the House of Rep-
11 resentatives within 2 months after the date of adoption
12 of this resolution.

○