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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 28, 2008

The Honorable Darrell Issa
211 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Souder
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Issa and Rep. Souder:

I am writing regarding your request that the Committee investigate allegations that mortgage lenders provided preferential treatment for members of Congress and congressional staff. I appreciate your input regarding the Committee's agenda.

This type of issue has come up previously. During the Clinton campaign finance investigation, some members of the Committee requested that the Committee's investigation be extended to examine the fundraising activities of members of Congress. The decision made by Chairman Burton was to defer on these issues to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, which has primary jurisdiction over the conduct of members. Last Congress, during the Committee's investigation of Jack Abramoff, Chairman Davis made a decision for similar reasons to limit the Committee's inquiry to Mr. Abramoff's contacts with the White House and not to examine the actions of members of Congress. I followed this precedent this Congress.

Because the issues you raise would require the Committee to investigate the conduct of members, the precedents of the Committee indicate that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct would be the appropriate venue for the issues you have raised.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Chairman

cc: Tom Davis
Ranking Minority Member