

## Dec 7 2005 - ETHICS FACT CHECK

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Republican Leadership Views Ethical Reform in the House as Playing Politics

Sensenbrenner Says Calls for Ethics Reform are just 'partisan politics'

Washington, DC. -This morning on the House floor, Republican Rep. James Sensenbrenner, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee responded to Rep. Louise Slaughter's call for immediate ethics reform in the House as mere 'partisan politics'.

Rep. Slaughter later commented that "The fact that Sensenbrenner, DeLay and the Republican Leadership view ethics reform as just politics is half the problem in this House. Their dim view shows through very clearly to the American people and demonstrates that they are truly out-of-touch." She continued, "Ethics reform is the most serious issue we face in Congress today because the corruption pervades everything we do."

#### MYTH:

"We have heard from three members on the other side of the aisle basically making a partisan attack. Folks, there is a time for partisan politics and there is a time to deal with the people's business...Mr. Speaker, this was not the vehicle to launch a partisan attack." - Rep. Sensenbrenner, 12.07.05/House Floor

#### FACT:

Calls for reform of the House ethics process, the House Ethics committee and demands for ethical accountability in the House are the people's business and has bipartisan support:

Republican Senator John McCain expressed his concern about the ethics scandals within his own party yesterday on NBC's Meet the Press: "I don't think the Ethics Committees are working very well. The latest Cunningham scandal was uncovered by the San Diego newspaper, not by anyone here...." [Senator John McCain on NBC's "Meet the Press," 12/4/05]

Even former Speaker Newt Gingrich is tired of the Republican culture of corruption epitomized by Abramoff and Cunningham: "Gingrich said he was deeply troubled by the resignation Monday of Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, R-Calif., and by the widening bribery and ethics investigation into the activities of lobbyist Jack Abramoff. "Frankly, it sickens me," Gingrich said. He called on Republicans to lead on ethics reform." [Glen Warchol, "Gingrich implores GOP to 'clean it up',The Salt Lake Tribune, 12/2/05 ]

Despite the mount of corruption scandals, the ethics committees in Congress are still sitting on sidelines: "There is no ethics enforcement in Congress today, and it's inexcusable." [Tom Fitton, President of Judicial Watch, a conservative monitor of government ethics, Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, "In a Season of Scandals, Ethics Panels Are on Sidelines," The Washington Post, 12/5/05]

Former Republican Congressman Joe Scarborough is concerned about the implosion of ethics process in the People's House, implying as many as 60 congressional lawmakers may be linked to the corruption scandals engulfing the Capitol Hill: "You know, Duke Cunningham got caught, but the question many Americans are asking is, how deep is the congressional cesspool? Six members are currently under investigation for possible crimes and ethics violations. And some reports say the number could go as high as 60. What in the heck is going on in the nation's capital?" [Joe Scarborough on "Scarborough Country," 11/29/05].