

Feb 1 2006 - House Democrats Release Sweeping Ethics Reform Package

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Legislation is Substantially More Comprehensive Than Republican Version

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today joined over 150 Democratic Members in introducing the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, an aggressive reform package to reverse Republican excesses and protect the public trust.

"Together, America can do better than the Republicans' minor, symbolic reform that does nothing to fundamentally clean up Washington, D.C.," Rep. Slaughter said. "This bold ethics reform legislation is the only long-term solution to this growing crisis," she added.

The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act will focus sweeping government reforms on four key areas:

- Banning travel and gifts from lobbyists, and those who employ them, and requiring lobbyists to disclose campaign contributions, so that the Jack Abramoffs of the world cannot buy influence in Congress;

- Reducing the unprecedented political access Republicans have given to corporations and lobbying firms by ending the K Street project and prohibiting Members from giving legislative favors to lobbying firms in exchange for hiring Members of their same party;

- Ending the "dead of night" special interest provisions and requiring disclosure of earmarks, so that the public to see exactly what their elected representatives are doing in Washington; and

- Stopping the revolving door between government and lobbyists by extending the lobbying ban to two years.

In contrast, today, Republicans offered up a bill that simply banned former Members who become lobbyists from the House Floor and gym.