

December 29, 2006

Statement of Chairman Doc Hastings and Ranking Minority Member Howard L. Berman
Regarding Representative John Conyers

The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, pursuant to Committee Rule 18(a), initiated an informal inquiry in December 2003 into reports that members of the congressional staff of Representative John Conyers had performed campaign activity on official time and in some instances using official resources, and that some staff members may have been compelled to do campaign work or personal work for Representative Conyers. The assertions in the reports, if true, could implicate a number of laws and House rules applicable to Members, including: House Rule 23, clause 1 (requiring the conduct of a Member or employee to reflect creditably on the House of representatives); House Rule 23, clause 8 (requiring that congressional staff perform official duties commensurate with compensation); 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a) and corresponding regulations of the Committee on House Administration (providing that official funds may be used only for the purposes appropriated); and 18 U.S.C § 606 (prohibiting adverse personnel action or intimidation to secure a "contribution of money or other valuable thing" including services, for a political purpose).

Committee Rule 18(a) permits the Committee, in the absence of a filed complaint, to consider "any information in its possession indicating that a Member, officer, or employee may have committed a violation of the Code of Official Conduct or any law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct" The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member may jointly gather additional information concerning such a potential violation unless and until an investigative subcommittee is established.

During the course of their inquiry, the Chairman and Ranking Member asked for and received information, including documents, from several sources, including Representative Conyers. Committee staff also interviewed witnesses regarding the allegations.

In the course of providing information to the Committee, Representative Conyers acknowledged what he characterized as a "lack of clarity" in his communications with staff members regarding their official duties and responsibilities, and accepted responsibility for his actions. Representative Conyers also provided the Committee with documents indicating that he had begun taking steps to provide clearer guidance to staff regarding the requirement that campaign work and official work be separate.

After reviewing the information gathered during the inquiry, and in light of Representative Conyers' cooperation with the inquiry, we have concluded that this matter should be resolved through the issuance of this public statement and the agreement by Representative Conyers to take a number of additional, significant steps to ensure that his

office complies with all rules and standards regarding campaign and personal work by congressional staff.

Representative Conyers has agreed to the following conditions:

1. Prohibiting his personal congressional staff (other than his Chief of Staff) from performing any campaign-related work, including work done on a voluntary basis, during the 110th Congress, unless the staff member takes a paid position on his campaign while on leave without pay status and obtains prior written approval from the Committee.
2. Informing staff members in writing of the prohibition set forth above against the voluntary performance of campaign work.
3. Distributing a memorandum to each member of his personal congressional staff which clearly sets forth all House rules concerning (1) the performance of campaign and other non-official work by congressional staff members and (2) the prohibition against the performance of any campaign-related work being conducted in either his congressional or district offices. Additionally, this memorandum will explicitly state that the performance of campaign or other non-official work by staff members may not be required as a condition of their employment.
4. Directing that meetings of his personal congressional staff be held annually in which the House rules concerning staff participation in campaign activities are discussed and explained. In addition, a description of these rules will be made a part of the orientation for all new staff employees.
5. Continuing to maintain the detailed time-keeping system initiated by Rep. Conyers during the course of the Committee's inquiry.
6. Requiring that all members of his congressional staff attend a briefing conducted by Committee counsel on the application of, and compliance with, applicable House rules concerning the performance of campaign and other non-official work by congressional staff members.

Provided that the above requirements are complied with, this matter will remain closed, and the Committee will take no further action on it.