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ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

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March 27, 2015

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN AND RANKING MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS REGARDING REPRESENTATIVE ED WHITFIELD

In accordance with House Rule XI, clause 3, and Committee Rules 10(a)(2) and 18, the Committee on Ethics (Committee) unanimously voted on March 25, 2015, to establish an Investigative Subcommittee. Pursuant to the Committee's action, the Investigative Subcommittee shall have jurisdiction to determine whether Representative Ed Whitfield violated the Code of Official Conduct or any law, rule, regulation, or other applicable standard of conduct in the performance of his duties or the discharge of his responsibilities, with respect to allegations that he failed to prohibit lobbying contacts between his staff and his wife, improperly used his official position for the beneficial interest of himself or his wife, and dispensed special favors or privileges to either his wife, the Humane Society Legislative Fund, or the Humane Society of the United States.

The Committee has determined to take this action based upon a discretionary review of the allegations, as well as evidence obtained pursuant to Committee Rule 18(a), authorized by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee for the 113th Congress. On June 10, 2014, the Committee received a referral from the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) regarding the aforementioned allegations. The Committee publicly released that referral on November 10, 2014, in accordance with House and Committee Rules. As provided by House Rule X, clause 1(g) and Committee Rule 17A(a), the Committee has exclusive jurisdiction over the interpretation, administration, and enforcement of the Code of Official Conduct. Consistent with the Committee's rules, it reviews OCE's Report and Findings without prejudice or presumptions as to the merit of the allegations.

The Committee notes that the mere fact of establishing an Investigative Subcommittee does not itself indicate that any violation has occurred.

The Honorable Kenny Marchant will serve as the Chair of the Investigative Subcommittee, and the Honorable Ted Deutch will serve as the Ranking Member. The other two members of the Investigative Subcommittee are the Honorable Barbara Comstock and the Honorable John Carney. No other public comment will be made on this matter except in accordance with Committee rules.

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