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Theodore E. Deutch, Florida
Ranking Member



ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

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December 21, 2017

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRWOMAN AND RANKING MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS REGARDING REPRESENTATIVE BLAKE FARENTHOLD

Pursuant to Committee Rule 7(g), the Chairwoman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Ethics (Committee) determined on December 21, 2017, to release the following statement:

On December 7, 2017, the Committee announced it had voted to establish an Investigative Subcommittee (ISC) with jurisdiction to determine whether Representative Blake Farenthold 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, or any person acting on his behalf, sexually harassed a former member of his staff, discriminated against her on the basis of her gender, and retaliated against her for complaining of discriminatory conduct, and allegations that Representative Farenthold made inappropriate statements to other members of his official staff.

On December 21, 2017, in accordance with House Rule XI, clause 3(o)(2), and Committee Rule 19(d), the Committee voted unanimously to expand the jurisdiction of the ISC's inquiry regarding Representative Blake Farenthold to include:

Whether Representative Farenthold violated the Code of Official Conduct or any law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the performance of his duties or the discharge of his responsibilities, with respect to: (1) allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation by Representative Farenthold, or any person acting on his behalf, toward any member of his congressional staff while they were employed in his congressional office; (2) allegations that Representative Farenthold's congressional staff may have used House resources, including staff time, to benefit his congressional campaigns; (3) allegations that Representative Farenthold, or any person acting on his behalf, may have required members of his congressional staff to work on his congressional campaigns; and (4) allegations that Representative Farenthold may have made false statements or omissions in testimony to the Committee.

The Committee notes that the mere fact of an investigation into these allegations does not itself indicate that any violation has occurred. No other public comment will be made on this matter except in accordance with Committee rules.

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