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Busby Calls House Leadership Ethics Proposal a 'Band-Aid' That Doesn't Change the Way Washington Works

Encinitas, Ca – Congressional Candidate Francine Busby today applauded the leadership in Congress for acknowledging their own culture of corruption but criticized their proposal for “using a band-aid where a tourniquet is necessary.” The plan released by the leadership would ban privately funded congressional travel, limit some gifts from lobbyists and increase the waiting period for former members of Congress and former House staffers to become lobbyists.

“This proposal would not substantially change the way Washington works. Establishment politicians have proposed a reform package that sounds good for a press conference but doesn't restore honesty and integrity to our government,” said Busby.

“I have promised the toughest anti-lobbyist practices of anyone in Congress: no gifts, no trips, no secret meetings, no outside financial relationships and no exceptions. None of the other candidates in this race have made that promise.”

“What is most telling is what the House leadership and my opponents still think is acceptable: personal financial deals between members of congress and government contractors, anonymous appropriations that members insert on behalf of lobbyists, secret meetings with lobbyists and the former staffers cashing in on their connections by lobbying members.”

“This proposal is one built around allowing the current system to continue. It supposedly bans gifts – but allows for exceptions. It supposedly limits conflicts of interest – but only slows down the lobbyist/staff revolving door. It supposedly bans privately funded travel – but continues to allow outside financial relationships between government contractors and members of Congress. Its time to take dramatic action to change the way Washington works and that means tough ethics rules with no exceptions,” said Busby.

In November, Busby released the CLEAN House Act and last week released CLEAN Office. She has asked the other candidates in the race to sign onto her proposals. All the other candidates have refused to support her comprehensive reform plan.

Links: “BUSBY UNVEILS 'CLEAN HOUSE ACT',” Press Release, Nov 11, 2005, http://busbyforcongress.org/downloads/pressroom/20051121_pr_Clean-House.pdf
“BUSBY RELEASES CLEAN OFFICE PROPOSAL,” Press Release, Jan 11, 2005, http://busbyforcongress.org/downloads/pressroom/20060111_pr_clean-office.pdf

Paid for by Francine Busby for Congress. Authorized by Francine Busby.

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Francine Busby's CLEAN Proposals vs. House Leadership's Band-Aid Proposal

| | Francine Busby's Proposalⁱ | House Leadership Proposalⁱⁱ |
|--|---|--|
| Relationships with Government Contractors | Ban All Outside Relationships With Government Contractors | BLANK |
| Members Promoting Businesses | Ban Members from Promoting Specific Businesses for Government Contracts or Regulatory Favors | BLANK |
| Anonymous Appropriations | Eliminate Anonymous Appropriations | BLANK |
| Privately Funded Travel | Ban All Privately Funded Congressional Travel | A ban on privately-funded travel |
| Disclosure | NO SECRET LOBBYIST MEETINGS: My office will report any meeting any member of my staff or I have with a registered lobbyist on my website once a week. | Stronger and more frequent disclosure on the part of lobbyists and third parties. |
| Access of Former Members | NO HELPING MEMBERS CASH IN: I will not allow any member of Congress with whom I have served who becomes a federal registered lobbyist lobby me or my office on any issue. | The elimination of floor and gym access for former members who are registered lobbyists. |
| Access of Former Staffers | NO HELPING LOBBYISTS CASH IN: I will not allow any former member of my staff who has become a registered federal lobbyist lobby my staff or me on any issue. | Expanding the post-employment lobbying ban to two years for members and senior staff. |
| Lobbyist Gifts | NO LOBBYIST GIFTS: I will not accept or allow my staff to accept any gifts from any registered federal lobbyist as is proposed in Representative George Miller's legislation. | A gift ban, preventing members and staff from personally benefiting from gifts from lobbyists. Allows exceptions for inconsequential items like baseball caps. |

ⁱ Busby CLEAN House and CLEAN Office Proposal, http://busbyforcongress.org/downloads/pressroom/20051121_pr_Clean-House.pdf and http://busbyforcongress.org/downloads/pressroom/20060111_pr_clean-office.pdf

ⁱⁱ Press Release from Congressman Drier's Office, 1/17/2006; <http://dreier.house.gov/releases/pr011706.htm>