



REFORMING WASHINGTON: TAKING BACK OUR GOVERNMENT
Turning the Page on Special Interest Driven Politics

The Bush Administration has turned our government into a game only the lobbyists and special interests can afford to play. They write the checks and you get stuck with the bills, they get the access while you get to write a letter, they think they own this government, but under Barack Obama's leadership we're going to take it back.

The evidence of the Bush Administration and its cronies manipulating public policy for private gain is staggering: Oil and gas executives met in secret with Vice President Cheney to write our energy laws with the goal of increasing their profits and saddling the public with their environmental and public health costs. An industry executive was appointed by the White House to the position of czar on global warming while some of the nation's top climate scientists at federal agencies were silenced. Lobbyists representing military contractors switched sides from bidding on Pentagon contracts to giving them out to their former employers, and ultimately left the government to manage contracts with the companies they selected. Drug company executives and lobbyists exercised unparalleled influence over the levers of government, using Administration rulemaking and the revolving door to frustrate efforts to get cheaper, safer prescription drugs on the market. In every case, and at every turn, the special interests won and the public lost.

Barack Obama has led efforts to reform government both in the Illinois State Senate and in the United States Senate. He will bring this commitment to making government work for the people, not the special interests, to the White House. On the first day he takes office Obama will begin implementing his plan to make Washington work for the people, not the special interests.

CLOSING THE REVOLVING DOOR

Barack Obama will establish new requirements for political appointees to discourage the use of public sector positions for personal or private gain.

(1) CLOSING THE REVOLVING DOOR ON FORMER EMPLOYERS: Obama will eliminate incentives that could be provided to newly-hired public employees to favor their former employers. No political appointees in an Obama Administration will be permitted to work on regulations or contracts directly and substantially related to their prior employer

for two years. A two-year ban will remove the incentive to employers to provide some sort of financial incentive, such as generous severance package, to an employee leaving for a government job with an agency that regulates them.

REVOLVING DOOR EXAMPLES:

- **Lobbyist Nominated to Lead Consumer Protection Commission Given Big Severance Package by the Industry he would Regulate:** Barack Obama opposed the nomination of Michael Baroody to head the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Mr. Baroody was an industry lobbyist for the National Manufacturers Association, which rewarded him with a \$150,000 severance package before he became the Bush administration's nominee to head the CPSC. Joan Claybrook, president of Public Citizen, said, "His nomination to this critical post was astoundingly inappropriate and would have put American families at further risk because of his interest in weakening safeguards against potentially dangerous products." The nomination was pulled before a vote was held. [[Washington Post](#), 5/24/07]

(2) CLOSING THE REVOLVING DOOR FOR FUTURE EMPLOYERS: Obama will also shut the revolving door on appointees who would leave his Administration to become lobbyists. In an Obama Administration no political appointee will be able to lobby the executive branch during the remainder of the Administration.

REVOLVING DOOR EXAMPLES:

- **Former U.S. Rep Billy Tauzin Became PHARMA Top Lobbyist after Prescription Drug Benefit was Passed.** According to the [Detroit News](#), Billy Tauzin, a former top-ranking Republican member of Congress, switched jobs once the Medicare drug bill was passed in Congress. As head of the Energy and Commerce Committee, he was a co-sponsor of the new drug law. Tauzin is now the top lobbyist for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, earning an estimated \$2 million per year. [[The Detroit News](#), 4/7/06]
 - **15 Congressional Staffers, Congressman, and Federal Officials Who Worked on Medicare Prescription Drug Bill Left to Work for the Pharmaceutical Industry.** According to CBS 60 Minutes, "In all, at least 15 congressional staffers, congressmen and federal officials who worked on the prescription drug bill left to go to work for the pharmaceutical industry, whose profits were increased by several billion dollars... Former Senators Dennis Deconcini and Steve Symms, and former congressmen like Tom Downey, Vic Fazio, Bill Paxon, and former House Minority Leader Robert Michel all registered as lobbyists for the drug industry and worked on the prescription drug bill." [CBS News, 4/1/07]

- **Cheney Aide During Energy Task Force Later Became An Energy Lobbyist.** The Boston Globe wrote, "...the executive director of Vice President Dick Cheney's energy task force, whose closed-door meetings with industry executives enraged environmentalists and prompted a Supreme Court showdown this week, became an energy lobbyist just months after leaving the White House. Andrew Lundquist served as the energy task force executive director from Feb. 1, 2001, to Sept. 30, 2001, and then stayed on as Cheney's director of energy policy from Oct. 1, 2001, to March 26, 2002. Then, a day after leaving government service, he opened a consulting business. Nine months later, Lundquist was a registered lobbyist for companies that stood to benefit from the energy policy he helped craft." [Boston Globe, 4/25/04]

ENDING ABUSE OF NO-BID CONTRACTS

(1) FIGHT WASTEFUL SPENDING BY ENDING ABUSE OF NO-BID CONTRACTS: The current Administration has abused its power by handing out contracts without competition to its politically connected friends and supporters. These abuses cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year. According to a 2006 study by the House Government Reform Committee, federal contracting mushroomed from \$203 billion in FY 2000 to \$377 billion by FY 2005—an increase of 86 percent. And the value of contracts not subject to full and open competition grew from \$67 billion to \$145 billion during the same period—an increase of 115 percent. According to a report by the Center for American Progress, during just the last three years more than five federal officials have been convicted of crimes involving federal contracting, three others were placed under indictment, and more are under investigation. Barack Obama will end abuse of no-bid contracts. He will require that all contract orders over \$25,000 be competitively awarded unless the contracting officer provides written justification that the order falls within a specified exception and that the requirements and evaluation criteria are clear for every contract.

NO-BID CONTRACT ABUSES:

- **The Bush White House Awarded Katrina and Iraq Contracts to Politically-connected Companies.** The Bush White House awarded contracts related to Hurricane Katrina and Iraq to politically-connected companies without competitive bidding, and used so-called "cost-plus" provisions that guarantee contractors a certain profit regardless of how much they spend. In Iraq, audits showed that hundreds of millions of dollars were misspent by contractors willing to stretch or break the rules. Audits also found evidence of procurement officers paying contractors twice for the same work and spending tens of millions of dollars with little to no documentation. [The Wall Street Journal, 9/12/05].
- **No-Bid Katrina Contracts to Bush's Friends Lead to a Predictably Poor Result.** \$400 million in no-bid contracts were awarded after Hurricane

Katrina, \$100 million each to four firms that were supposed to provide temporary housing to hurricane victims. One of the contracts was awarded to the Shaw Group, whose lobbyist, Joe Allbaugh, was the former FEMA director and Bush campaign manager. Viewed in light of such questionable contracting circumstances, the mismanagement and inefficiency of the temporary housing procedures following Katrina are not surprising. [[New York Times](#), 10/07/2005]

- **No-Bid Contracts Cost Taxpayers Money.** Kyle “Dusty” Foggo, the Executive Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), helped direct a \$1.7 million contract for bottled water supplies in Iraq to his old friend Brent Wilkes. The government ended up paying 60% above the market price for the water, while Wilkes paid for Foggo to take a luxurious trip to Scotland that cost over \$60,000. [Center for American Progress, 5/2007]
- **The Pentagon secretly awarded Halliburton Subsidiary No-Bid Contract.** The Pentagon secretly awarded Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg, Brown & Root a two-year, \$7 billion, no-bid contract to combat oil well fires and post-war reconstruction of Iraq’s petroleum industry. According to the chief counsel for the Army Corps of Engineers, oil field damage was limited, meaning that Halliburton should collect much less than \$7 billion. However, the mission and contract’s classified status shielded Halliburton’s take from public scrutiny. GSM Consulting, which has extensive experience fighting oil well fires from the first Gulf War, was not invited to bid against Halliburton, where Dick Cheney was CEO prior to becoming Vice President. Over a month after the contract was awarded to Halliburton, the Department of Commerce told GSM that “there weren’t going to be oil well fires.” [CBS, 60 Minutes, 09/21/2003]
- **Cheney's Halliburton Raked In Massive Profits By Overcharging The US Government By Millions For No-Bid Contracts.** [The Washington Post](#) wrote, “Vice President Cheney's old company Halliburton, one of a number of companies with close ties to the Republican Party given no-bid contracts by the Bush Administration to deliver services in the reconstruction effort in Iraq, overcharged the U.S. government, bilking millions of taxpayer dollars resulting in massive profits for the company. These no-bid contracts have had no congressional oversight from the Republican-controlled Congress, despite Democratic efforts to do so and prevent war profiteering.” [[Washington Post](#), 10/19/06]
- **Defense Contracts Were Awarded To MZM Without Competition.** [The San Diego Union-Tribune](#) wrote, “MZM had 56 contracts totaling more than \$68.5 million in fiscal year 2004. The contracts were mostly awarded without competition through a process known as ‘blanket purchase agreements.’ The General Services Administration awarded MZM a five-year, \$250 million blanket-purchase agreement in 2002 that allow MZM to shop its services to any U.S. government agency, with considerably less oversight and

competition than the normal bidding process until 2007 or until it reaches its \$250 million cap.” [San Diego Union-Tribune, 6/21/05, 6/25/05]

RESTORING OBJECTIVITY TO THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

(1) BAN GIFTS TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH EMPLOYEES: Gifts from registered lobbyists harm the political process because they give lobbyists an avenue for building and maintaining relationships that advance their agendas. As president, Barack Obama will issue an executive order banning registered lobbyists or lobbying firms from giving gifts in any amount or any form to executive branch employees. An Obama Administration will make decisions that affect the country based on what is best for the public, not what is best for lobbyists.

Using Gifts to Buy Influence:

- **Special Assistant To The President Susan Ralston Resigned After It Was Disclosed That She Accepted Gifts.** The Washington Post wrote, “A top aide to White House strategist Karl Rove resigned after disclosures that she accepted gifts and passed information to now-convicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff, becoming the first official in the West Wing to lose a job in the influence-peddling scandal. Susan Ralston’s resignation came a month before the midterm elections, just after a congressional report showed that Ralston accepted sometimes-pricey tickets to nine sports and entertainment events from Abramoff while she provided him with inside White House information. Ralston was Mr. Abramoff’s executive assistant before taking a similar job for Karl Rove at the White House where she was eventually promoted to Special Assistant to the President.” [Chicago Tribune, 10/8/06; Washingtonpost.com, 4/16/07]
- **Former Interior Department Official Roger Stillwell was Sentenced to Two Years Probation for Not Reporting Hundreds of Dollars Worth of Sports and Concert Tickets he Received.** The Washington Post wrote, “Roger Stillwell, a former Interior Department official, was sentenced to two years on probation in January after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor charge for not reporting hundreds of dollars worth of sports and concert tickets he received from Abramoff. Stillwell worked in the Interior Department’s Insular Affairs Office, which handles issues involving the [Northern Marianas Island’s] government.” [AP, 4/24/07; Washington Post, 1/10/07]

(2) FREE CAREER OFFICIALS FROM THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICS: Too often decisions in the executive branch, such as hiring and promotion, rely on ideology and political loyalty, with insufficient regard for competence and experience. The ideological litmus tests used by Monica Goodling and others to fill non-political positions within U.S. Attorney’s Offices, the Civil Rights Division, and the Immigration Court illustrate unchecked abuses by political appointees. Barack Obama will issue an Executive Order asking all new hires at the agencies to sign a form affirming that no political appointee

offered them the job solely on the basis of political affiliation or contribution. The Executive Order will also require that all employees engaged in and making hiring decisions also certify that they will not take political affiliation into account as they make hiring decisions for career positions.

Ideology Trumps Good Decisions:

- **Bias in Awarding Contracts.** President Bush’s Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Alphonso Jackson, brazenly boasted in a public speech about canceling a HUD contract due only to the contractor’s dislike of President Bush. That it would not occur to a cabinet secretary that being so forthright about using political favoritism in public service contracting is wrong, demonstrates the pervasiveness of political corruption in this administration. The fact that Alphonso Jackson is still HUD Secretary over a year later, shows their continued embrace of that corruption. [[Dallas Business Journal](#), 5/6/2006]
- **Former Counsel and White House Liaison for Justice Resigned After Her Role Using Political Litmus Tests in The Firing of Eight U.S. Attorneys Came to Light.** [The AP](#) wrote, “Monica Goodling resigned from the Justice Department after refusing to testify to Congress about her role in the firings of eight U.S. attorneys. Now the Justice Department is investigating whether its former White House liaison used political affiliations in deciding whom to hire as entry-level prosecutors in some U.S. attorney offices around the country...Such consideration would be a violation of federal law. The inquiry has raised new concerns that politics might have cast a shadow over the independence of trial prosecutors who enforce U.S. laws.” [AP, 5/2/07]
- **Bias in Hiring Immigration Judges.** At least one-third of the immigration judges appointed by the [Justice Department](#) since 2004 have had Republican connections or have been administration insiders, and half lacked experience in immigration law. [[Washington Post](#), 6/11/07].

(3) REMOVE THE USE OF PUBLIC OFFICE FOR PARTISAN ADVANTAGE: Public office should not be used to advance political interests. Too often federal workers dismiss the law that governs political activity, both because of political incentives not to use it and because of inadequate enforcement mechanisms. As president, Barack Obama will issue an Executive Order banning the use of public office to further partisan advantage in political elections. Obama’s Executive Order will create an additional and effective enforcement mechanism of the Hatch Act’s prohibitions on ideological litmus tests for non-political hires and other political appointee abuses. Under the enforcement procedure, any non-political civil servant who believes a Hatch Act violation has occurred may submit a written complaint with the Inspector General of the agency involved. Within 60 days of receipt of the complaint, the Inspector General will be required to investigate and issue a written report detailing the scope of the investigation and findings indicating whether the complaint has merit. When the agency head’s decision is challenged, the report shall be made to the President. A finding by the

Inspector General that activity was improperly based upon political considerations shall be a basis for discipline, up to and including termination.

Abuse of Public Office for Partisan Advantage:

- **GSA Chief Accused of “Engaging in the Most Pernicious of Political Activity” For Giving a Presentation to Political Appointees on What Could be Done to “Help Our Candidates.”** The Washington Post wrote, “In a June 8 letter to Bush, Special Counsel Scott J. Bloch accused Doan of ‘engaging in the most pernicious of political activity’ during a Jan. 26 lunch briefing involving 36 GSA political appointees and featuring a PowerPoint presentation about the November elections by the White House’s deputy director of political affairs. At the presentation’s conclusion, Doan asked what could be done to ‘help our candidates,’ according to a special counsel report. Several GSA appointees who watched the presentation told special counsel investigators that some appointees responded with ideas of how the agency could use its facilities to benefit the Republican Party. Later, after the special counsel’s office received a complaint about the episode and began investigating, Doan showed ‘a proclivity toward misrepresentation and obstructing an official investigation,’ Bloch told the president in a four-page letter that accompanied an eight-page memo about the case. [Washington Post, 6/12/07]

INCREASING PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

(1) SUNLIGHT BEFORE SIGNING: Too often bills are rushed through Congress and to the president before the public has the opportunity to review them. As president, Barack Obama will not sign any non-emergency bill without giving the American public an opportunity to review and comment on the White House website for five days. In addition to ensuring that the public has the ability to review legislation, the sunlight will help ensure that earmarks tucked into appropriations bills are exposed. And Obama will sign legislation in the light of day without attaching signing statements that undermine the legislative intent.

Sunlight Needed:

- **More Than Any Other President in History, President Bush Has Used Signing Statements to Refuse to Carry Out Legislation Properly Enacted by Congress.** Bush has used signing statements to ignore a congressional ban on torture, to avoid reporting to Congress on the secret searches and seizures of homes under the Patriot Act, and to neglect a requirement that scientists and whistleblowers be able to transmit information to Congress without executive branch censorship. These are just a few examples among the over 800 signing statements Bush has used to avoid enforcing legislation. Prior to his administration, only 600 signing statements had been issued in over 200 years of U.S. presidential history. [American Bar Association, 7/24/06]

- **DeLay And Hastert Used Rules Committee To Rewrite Bills To Their Advantage.** The Denver Post wrote, “DeLay and Hastert have used the Rules Committee to rewrite bills, often in the middle of the night, then waive the rules to move them to the floor before House members could thoroughly read them. For example, House-Senate conference reports are supposed to be published in the Congressional Record and then held for at least three days before a vote. In the last Congress, according to Rules Committee Democratic staff, the committee waived that requirement on each of 28 conference reports. Anyone wanting to read the 299-page bill authorizing the last session’s Republican tax cuts, for example, had 40 seconds to read each page.” [Denver Post, 3/27/05]

(2) 21ST CENTURY FIRESIDE CHATS: People who care deeply about issues in Washington but live outside the beltway rarely have the opportunity to question and interact with government agencies. Messages are filtered through the media, and many times the hard questions are not asked. Barack Obama will bring democracy and policy directly to the people by requiring his Cabinet officials to have periodic national broadband town hall meetings to discuss issues before their agencies. The Internet makes it possible to take our leaders directly to the people. If this is possible then it should also be mandatory.

(3) RESTORE MEANING TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: The American people deserve to know what their government does and why. Ours is an open government, and our ability to understand our government at work--the freedom of information we enjoy--has been copied by other countries around the world. The Freedom of Information Act is a pillar of our open government. Unfortunately, in recent years our government has failed to keep the American people informed about what it was doing and why, and it has refused to provide Americans with information they are entitled to by law. Turning our tradition of free information upside down, the Bush administration has instructed agencies to presume citizens are not entitled to information unless they are willing to sue for it. Barack Obama would restore the tradition of free information by issuing an Executive Order that information should be released unless an agency reasonably foresees harm to a protected interest.

Promote Freedom of Information:

SF Chronicle Editorial: Ashcroft “Vigorously Urged Federal Agencies to Resist Most [FOIA] Requests Made by American Citizens.” The San Francisco Chronicle wrote in an editorial, “The President didn’t ask the networks for television time. The attorney general didn’t hold a press conference. The media didn’t report any dramatic change in governmental policy. As a result, most Americans had no idea that one of their most precious freedoms disappeared on Oct. 12. Yet it happened. In a memo that slipped beneath the political radar, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft vigorously urged federal agencies to resist most Freedom of Information Act requests made by American citizens.... Yet without fanfare, the attorney general simply quashed the FOIA. The Department of Justice did not respond to numerous calls from The Chronicle to comment on the memo.

So, rather than asking federal officials to pay special attention when the public's right to know might collide with the government's need to safeguard our security, Ashcroft instead asked them to consider whether 'institutional, commercial and personal privacy interests could be implicated by disclosure of the information.'" [San Francisco Chronicle, 1/6/02]

Card Wrote Memo to All Agencies Detailing Exemptions to FOIA Laws to Withhold More Information, Allowing An Agency To Withhold Records Where Disclosure Could Lead To Circumvention Of A Law Or Regulation.

CQ wrote, "In March 2002, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card sent a memo to all agencies concerning the need to safeguard sensitive but unclassified information pertaining to homeland security. Because such undefined information did not qualify for classification on national security grounds, Card attached two short memos from Laura Kimberly, Acting Director of the Information Security Oversight Office, and Richard Huff and Daniel Metcalfe, Co-Directors of the Justice Department's Office of Information and Privacy, explaining possible FOIA exemptions that could be used to withhold such information. Primary among them was Exemption 2, which allows an agency to withhold records 'related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency.' Over the years, courts have stretched these words so they now allow an agency to withhold records where disclosure could lead to circumvention of a law or regulation. The Justice Department memo reminded agencies to consider using Exemption 2 for such sensitive but unclassified information on the untried theory that disclosure would allow a requester to circumvent a law or regulation. Although it said little about the scope of the problem, the Card memo was the first White House policy directive concerning the need to protect sensitive unclassified information and was certainly a primary factor in moving the development of such policies forward." [CQ, 3/2/05]

(4) CONDUCT REGULATORY AGENCY BUSINESS IN PUBLIC: Every day, government agencies make decisions that impact the lives of Americans. These decisions require public deliberation and input. But at many agencies, these deliberations are conducted out of the public view. For example, several agencies, including the Securities & Exchange Commission and the Federal Communications Commission, hold public meetings only one or two days a month. On all the other days, the commissioners and staff members host lobbyists and lawyers in private meetings, and operate outside of the public eye. In these private meetings, companies can make their case for the regulation that they want. Average citizens cannot participate in this process, and consumer groups just do not have the resources to offset the waves of corporate lobbyists that constantly walk the halls of these agencies.

Barack Obama will require his appointees who lead the Executive Branch departments and rulemaking agencies to conduct the significant business of the agency in public, so that any citizen can see in person or watch on the Internet as the agencies debate and deliberate the issues that affect American society. Videos of meetings will be archived on the web, and the transcript will be available to the public. Obama will also require his nominees to commit to employ all the technological tools available to allow average

citizens not just to observe, but to participate and be heard on the issues that affect their daily lives.

(5) MAKING WHITE HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: Barack Obama would amend Executive Order 12866 to ensure that communications about regulatory policymaking between persons outside government and all White House staff are disclosed to the public. The Obama White House would invoke its executive privilege to protect the confidentiality of communications concerning national security and similar traditionally sensitive matters, not to withhold information about private interests' communication on regulatory policy. There are communications that should be kept private because disclosure could endanger the public. But the White House is the people's house and the people have a right to know who visits.

Secrecy in the White House:

- **Oil and Gas Executives Met in Secret with the Vice President to Shape our Energy Laws with the Sole Goal of Increasing their Profits.** Vice President Dick Cheney's Energy Task Force drafted the White House's energy policy entirely behind closed doors. The Bush Administration fought ferociously to keep the proceedings secret, eventually taking the fight all the way to the Supreme Court. Task Force documents released as a result of a 2002 court order made clear that the Bush Administration issued executive orders and made regulatory decisions that reflected the requests by industry to weaken environmental laws. This provided an economic boon for industry, allowing them to weaken environmental protections at the expense of public health. [NRDC, 03/27/2002]
- **White House Employees Used Outside Non-Official Email Accounts to Discuss Federal Business—Emails That Were Later Lost.** The Washington Post wrote, "The White House acknowledged yesterday that e-mails dealing with official government business may have been lost because they were improperly sent through private accounts intended to be used for political activities...Administration officials said they could offer no estimate of how many e-mails were lost but indicated that some may involve messages from White House senior adviser Karl Rove, whose role in the firings has been under scrutiny by congressional Democrats. Democrats have charged that Rove and other officials may have used the private accounts, set up through the Republican National Committee, in an effort to avoid normal review. Under federal law, the White House is required to maintain records, including e-mails, involving presidential decision-making and deliberations." [Washington Post, 4/12/07]
- **White House Was Sued For Release of Records of Abramoff Visits; Released Only Partial Records, Saying the Rest Weren't Covered in Lawsuit.** In 2006, after the White House was sued for the release of records of Jack Abramoff's visits, they released records of two visits, one in 2001 and one in 2004. The New York Times wrote, "The two logs referred only to meetings in March 2001 and January 2004 but did not identify the White House officials that Mr. Abramoff met, nor the purpose of the visits. A White House spokeswoman, Erin Healy, said

she could offer no explanation of why the records released Wednesday did not reflect all of the visits by Mr. Abramoff that the White House had previously acknowledged. Asked if officials might have approved Mr. Abramoff's entry without requiring him to register at White House security posts, Ms. Healy declined comment. "I have nothing for you on that," she said. Two other administration officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of rules that generally bar them from speaking to reporters, said the White House had decided that the settlement of the lawsuit did not require other, more complete visitor logs to be made public. They said the more complete logs, known within the White House as Waves records, an acronym for the Workers Appointments and Visitors Entry System, would have identified the other visits by Mr. Abramoff." [New York Times, 5/11/06]

(6) EXPOSING TAX BREAKS AND EARMARKS TO PUBLIC SCRUTINY: Building on his "Google for government" bill, which was signed into law and allows every American to do a simple search and see exactly how federal money is being spent, Barack Obama will ensure that any tax breaks to special interests, or tax earmarks, are also publicly available by directing the Office of Management and Budget to post them on its website. Thousands of high-priced lobbyists prowl the halls of Congress trying to sneak in special tax breaks for their corporate clients. Transparency is the first step to holding government accountable, and we need to shine a little light on these tax breaks.

- **Bush's 2007 Budget Spent More on Tax Breaks for Big Oil than On Renewable Energy.** In 2007, the oil and gas industry received \$2 billion in tax breaks. Americans should be able to know which big company got their tax dollars as a gift." [Statement of Administration Policy on HR. 6 - Energy Policy Act of 2005]
- **Earmarks have exploded under Republican leadership.** Since Republicans took control of Congress in 1994, the number of earmarks in the federal budget has tripled to 13,000, and their value has increased by 2.5 times to \$67 billion per year. [Congressional Research Service, 1/26/06 and 3/6/06].

(7) POLITICAL APPOINTEE REFORM: FEMA Director Brown was not qualified to head the agency, and the result was a disaster for the people of New Orleans. But in an Obama Administration, every official will have to rise to the standard of proven excellence in the agency's mission. Barack Obama will issue an Executive Order requiring that political appointees possess relevant professional qualifications and experience related to the core mission of the agency for which they are nominated, and would restore integrity and competence to the executive branch.

Unqualified Appointees:

- **Former Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Michael Brown Resigned Under Intense Criticism After Hurricane Katrina Devastated The Gulf Coast.** Knigh Ridder wrote, "Michael Brown resigned under intense criticism after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005, and 'only after the president told him he was doing 'a heckuva job' in the midst of

disaster. Brown now takes responsibility for FEMA's slow response and admits he lied about what FEMA was doing in response to the hurricane. Brown also said he 'regrets not speaking up earlier about the Bush administration's lack of preparation for a massive disaster.' Brown continues to warn 'that the U.S. is still not ready for a massive disaster.'" [Knight Ridder, 5/1/07; AP, 4/5/07]

- **Bush Appointed Unqualified Inspectors General.** Inspectors General play a vital role in our democracy; they root out corruption, fraud, and government waste. A study by Representative Henry Waxman of California, the top Democrat on the House Government Reform Committee, found that more than 60% of the Inspectors General nominated by the Bush Administration had political experience; less than 20% had actual auditing experience. [Time, 09/24/2005]
- **Bush Point Man On Avian Flu Had No Public Health Management Background.** The Boston Herald wrote, "As the United States braces for a possible avian flu pandemic, the federal government's point man on the deadly virus is coming under fire. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Public Health Emergency Preparedness Stewart Simonson lacks a medical or public health management background. ... To some, Simonson's resume is disturbingly reminiscent of that of disgraced former Federal Emergency Management Agency director Michael Brown. ... During a Homeland Security Subcommittee hearing in April, Simonson took hits from Republicans... Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho) and Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) questioned the acquisition process for influenza vaccine and charged the country is unprepared for a pandemic." [Boston Herald, 10/7/05]
- **Bush Appointee to Head Regulatory Affairs Lacked Relevant Experience.** President Bush used a recess appointment to place Susan E. Dudley to the position of Administrator of the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA). Prior to working as head of OIRA, which has tremendous influence over the regulatory discretion of the Food and Drug Administration, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other regulatory agencies responsible for public health and safety, Dudley had a consistent pro-industry record at the expense of the public. As one example, she advocated for a weakening of the requirement that industries report their toxic emissions to the public, which would afford them the power to pollute without scrutiny. [Mercatus Center, 06/13/2002]
- **The Bush administration's record on prescription drugs was crafted by those with ties to industry.** The FDA panel that approved Vioxx and Bextra was filled with individuals who had taken money from the pharmaceutical industry [New York Times, 3/23/07; New York Times, 3/22/07]. Additionally, the Bush Administration Drug Importation Task Force, which issued a report opposing the importation of safe prescription drugs from overseas, was comprised of a majority of political appointees, not impartial scientists and researchers. [Public Citizen, 12/21/04].