



## **Enough Earmarks to Kill a Pig: Senate Should Pass New Earmark Lobbyist Disclosure Proposals**

**The number of Congressional earmarks has skyrocketed.** According to the Congressional Research Service, in FY 2005 there were 15,877 earmarks in the federal budget worth \$47.4 billion, compared to just 4,126 earmarks worth \$29.6 billion in FY 1994 – a 285 percent increase in the number of earmarks and a 60 percent increase in their cost.

**The Senate should eliminate the practice of slipping earmarks into spending bills outside of normal budgetary practice, without deliberations or a vote.** To improve this problem, every earmark should: 1) be identified with its Congressional sponsor; 2) include appropriations as well as tax bills; and 3) if added in conference committee, be subject to a point of order challenge on the floor and automatically removed, unless enough lawmakers vote to keep it on the bill. **In addition, Congress should require lobbyists to disclose the earmarks, if any, that they worked on.**

### **Public Citizen Research Shows Clear Harm from Secret Lobbyist Earmarks; Distorting Public Policy and Diminishing Integrity**

Some members of Congress recently voted out of office paid a heavy price for earmark abuse.

#### **Earmarks flowed through former Sen. Conrad Burns's revolving door**

For nearly a decade, a group of former top aides to Sen. Conrad Burns successfully used personal and professional connections to Burns, Montana State University's Burns Technology Center and other institutions to secure more than \$20 million in lobbying fees for themselves, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars in federal research contracts, tax breaks and subsidies for clients.<sup>1</sup>

The clients who benefited from the earmarks secured through the Burns revolving door included Microsoft, Intelstat and Lockheed Martin.<sup>2</sup> Burns held powerful positions as chairman of the Commerce, Science and Transportation subcommittee on communications through the end of 2004 and as a member of the Commerce and Appropriations committees. One earmark involved a \$1 million research grant Burns won

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<sup>1</sup> See Public Citizen's Ethics Hall of Shame, Sen. Conrad Burns (Available at <http://www.cleanupwashington.org/hos/page.cfm?pageid=26>).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

for the software firm Compressus. Not only was a former Burns staffer the lobbyist for Compressus, but Burn's daughter was named to its board of advisors two months later.<sup>3</sup>

### **Sen. Burns went to extraordinary lengths to help an Abramoff client.**

Burns lobbied the Interior Department to allocate \$3 million in federal funds set aside for poor tribal schools to the Saginaw Chippewa tribe of Michigan in 2003. The tribe, an Abramoff client, was among the wealthiest in the nation due to casino revenues. Burns's spokesman said the effort was to "help these tribes get a leg up and help the children get a good education."

But the need was dubious for the wealthy Saginaw Chippewas, as each member of the tribe receives an annual \$70,000 check. The Interior Department rejected the request because the tribe was not eligible. Burns then performed an end-run around the Interior Department's decision by earmarking the funds in a 2004 appropriations bill.<sup>4</sup>

### **Van Scoyoc Associates – a "Cottage Industry" in Earmarks**

Focusing on appropriations and taxation, one firm has continued to specialize in procuring earmarks for clients. Six of the top 10 congressional recipients of contributions from Stewart Van Scoyoc, a principal of the firm Van Scoyoc Associates, between 1998 and 2005 served on House or Senate appropriations committees.<sup>5</sup> Van Scoyoc's handiwork has shown up in many places:

- In 2003, the Alabama resort city of Orange Beach hired Van Scoyoc's firm to lobby for federal funds. Ray Cole, a Van Scoyoc Associates lobbyist and former top aide to Sen. Shelby (R.-AL), handled the account. Orange Beach paid the firm \$60,000 a year. City officials credit Cole with obtaining \$3.4 million in earmarks.

- Lobbyists for the city of San Antonio were surprised to learn in March 2006 that the House Science, State, Justice, and Commerce Appropriations Subcommittee was asked for earmarks totaling \$1.3 million to buy surveillance detection equipment for the city police department. The request was made by Van Scoyoc Associates' lobbyists Brian Prende, Andre Hollis and Stewart Van Scoyoc, who lobby for the manufacturer of the equipment, Remington ELSAG Law Enforcement Systems. The "Funding Request Form" said the "San Antonio Police Department" was the "actual recipient name."

### **The Bottom Line**

**Policy makers and the public should be able to identify the lobbyists – and powerful interests – that want access to public dollars. We urge Senators to SUPPORT lobbyist disclosure of earmarks.**

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<sup>3</sup> *Roll Call*, 3/8/2006; *Congress Daily*, 4/24/2006, available at <http://www.cleanupwashington.org/hos/>.

<sup>4</sup> *Washington Post*, 3/1/2005 and 3/5/2005, available at <http://www.cleanupwashington.org/hos/>.

<sup>5</sup> The Bankrollers, available at <http://www.citizen.org/document/BankrollersFinal.pdf>