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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
OFFICIAL CONDUCT

Washington, DC 20515-6328

June 20, 2007

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MEMORANDUM FOR ALL MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES

FROM: Committee on Standards of Official Conduct
Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Chairwoman
Doc Hastings, Ranking Republican Member

SUBJECT: Travel Approval Requests Must Be Submitted in a Timely Manner

This memorandum serves as a reminder to all House Members, officers, and employees that requests for Standards Committee approval of privately-funded, officially-connected travel are **mandatory and must be submitted in a timely manner**.

As part of the changes to the ethics rules made by H. Res. 6, effective March 1, 2007, every House Member or employee must receive approval from the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct *before* accepting officially-connected travel funded by a private source. The Committee issued travel guidelines and regulations on February 20, 2007 and an advisory memorandum on March 14, 2007 regarding the new rules. The Committee also created special forms, which are available on the Committee website (www.house.gov/ethics), to be completed by the trip sponsor and the traveler in seeking this approval. As indicated on those forms, **the Committee has asked that any request for approval of privately-funded, officially-connected travel be submitted to the Committee at least 30 days before the commencement of the trip**. That 30-day time period is necessary to allow the Committee ample time to review the submission and give final approval, while still permitting sufficient time for the traveler to make travel arrangements.

Notwithstanding this request, the Committee has repeatedly received requests far short of that 30-day deadline, including many merely a day or two before a trip was scheduled to begin. Given the volume of travel requests received, **the Committee cannot guarantee a response to any trip request submitted less than 30 days prior to the trip's departure date**. Acceptance of reimbursement for travel expenses for an unapproved trip violates House rules.

Any questions on this subject should be directed to the Committee's Office of Advice and Education at extension 5-7103.