

DENNIS J. KUCINICH
10TH DISTRICT, OHIO

2445 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-5871

14400 DETROIT AVENUE
LAKEWOOD, OHIO 44107
(216) 228-8850

PARMATOWN MALL
7904 DAY DRIVE
PARMA, OH 44129
(440) 845-2707



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

www.kucinich.house.gov

CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC POLICY

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND
GOVERNMENT REFORM

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

November 16, 2010

Dear Colleague,

Perhaps the most crucial vote you will cast in the reorganization of the 112th Congress involves the Ranking Member position of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. This is because the presumptive Chair of the full Committee, Rep. Darrell Issa of California, has already made wild and unsubstantiated charges which threaten to turn the principal oversight committee of the House into a witch hunt.

In just the past week, he has indicated a telling enthusiasm for a broad probe into the \$700 billion American Reinvestment and Recovery Act program. He has equated it with "walking around money." As you know, that is political slang for money off the books and under the table. He made this unsubstantiated claim in the context of promising hundreds of investigative hearings into the present Administration, calling President Obama "one of the most corrupt presidents in modern times." I immediately sent Mr. Issa a letter (attached) calling for him to produce the evidence for such charges or to retract his statement.

Mr. Issa, through his eagerness to make unsubstantiated charges and to draw conclusions in advance of evidence, reveals a lack of restraint and basic fairness. This conduct in the Chairman of the Committee will degrade Congress' oversight credibility and undermine the institution of the House through a lack of restraint in the use of subpoena power.

We cannot simply stand by idly and hope that such a reckless approach to the use of the power of the Chair will not happen, especially since it is not only being promised, but demonstrated by the person who will hold the gavel.

It is a matter of the highest importance that any intemperate use of the power of the Chair be challenged at every turn.

Accordingly, I have decided to step forward as a candidate for Ranking Member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. In that capacity, here is my pledge to you and our fellow members of the House:

1. **Zero tolerance for smears and innuendo.** Every single statement by Chairman Issa which is lacking in respect for the process of oversight, every unsubstantiated allegation or any publically pronounced assumption which lacks basic fairness will be promptly challenged.
2. I will encourage a **team approach** on the Committee which will tap the talents of all members to actively participate in responding to any abuse of process.

3. All members will receive **weekly updates of oversight activities** to be able to provide input.
4. **Cooperation** with Chairman Issa when, and only when, he proceeds in an even-handed manner which demonstrates basic fairness and respect for due process.

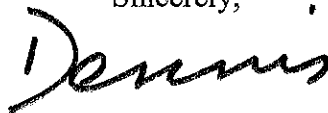
In the past two Congresses, the Domestic Policy Subcommittee, which I chaired, held over sixty hearings and heard testimony from hundreds of witnesses. We received testimony from Democratic and Republican administrations alike, proceeding in a deliberate and methodical manner, through thorough questioning of witnesses.

As Chairman, I worked closely with the Obama Administration. As a result of my advocacy and the multiple hearings that my Subcommittee held on foreclosure prevention, the Treasury Department created a \$15 billion nationwide principle reduction program for "underwater" borrowers and now will allow flexibility in the use of federal foreclosure prevention funds by state housing agencies so that they can hire foreclosure prevention counselors.

Aggressive and thorough oversight is never to be feared. It is a goal. Now, with the change in the leadership of the Committee, we must be ready to preserve that goal tirelessly, courageously and unstintingly. That is the only way we can defend the integrity of congressional oversight from becoming an abusive power.

I ask for your consideration and your vote for Ranking Member of the full Committee.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. Kucinich
Chair, Domestic Policy Subcommittee
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform