

News Release

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President Urged To Disclose His Abramoff Fundraising Web

Citing Lobbyist's 'Criminal Profile,' Group Says This Elite Bush "Pioneer" Donor Used Money as a Tool of Political Corruption.

Austin, Texas: Watchdog group Texans for Public Justice called today on President Bush to fully disclose all the campaign contributions that his reelection campaign received from lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

The 2004 Bush reelection campaign identified Jack Abramoff as a "Pioneer" fundraiser who raised between \$100,000 and \$200,000 for the campaign by bundling together contributions of up to \$2,000 apiece from individuals or \$5,000 from PACs. While the Bush campaign presumably disclosed the amounts, sources and dates of these Abramoff-associated contributions, it has never revealed which contributions Mr. Abramoff bundled together for Bush—much less the contributions associated with the 661 other elite fundraisers who helped Bush win the White House in 2000 and 2004.

Mr. Abramoff's guilty pleas on federal corruption charges earlier this week made clear that the public has a powerful interest in knowing the details of Mr. Abramoff's fundraising activities for President Bush. The criminal profile described in the Abramoff indictment is one of a crooked lobbyist who used "campaign contributions" and other "lavish" favors as a tool of political corruption to bribe and corrupt at least one Washington public official (the federal investigation is ongoing).

Mr. Abramoff has pled guilty to the indictment, which further alleges that he engaged in such bribery to forward the agendas of his lobby clients. Through the so-called "K Street Project," Mr. Abramoff and other powerful Washington lobbyists are known to have leaned on their clients to deliver campaign money to political committees and candidates. The public needs to know who provided the more than \$100,000 that the 2004 Bush campaign credited to Mr. Abramoff to find out which of these contributions came from Abramoff clients who may have sought or received special treatment from the White House.

Yesterday White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the President was donating a total of \$6,000 from Abramoff, his spouse and an Abramoff client (the Chippewa Indian Tribe) to a charity. But Bush will not return the bulk of the money that Abramoff raised as a Pioneer from undisclosed sources, said McClellan, who rhetorically asked the media, "Are you suggesting that there are others that were involved in

wrongdoing?”

Given how the K Street Project operates, the criminal profile outlined in Abramoff’s indictment, and the ongoing nature of that investigation, there is a distinct possibility that some cronies and clients that Abramoff recruited to contribute to Bush’s reelection campaign may have been involved in wrongdoing. “Jack Abramoff seems to have corrupted everything he came in contact with,” said Texans For Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. “Full disclosure is the best way to dispel concerns that Abramoff used his Bush Pioneer bundling operation to curry special treatment from the White House, just as he did in countless other incidents. What does President Bush have to hide?”

Given that more than 100 lobbyists served as elite Pioneer or Ranger fundraisers for Bush’s two presidential campaigns, Texans For Public Justice further calls on President Bush to fully disclose all the campaign contributions associated with each and every one of the Pioneers and Rangers who bundled money for his 2000 and 2004 campaigns.

The Bush campaign first released the identities of its Pioneer “bundlers” in 1999 following a call for disclosure from Texans for Public Justice.

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Texans for Public Justice is a non-profit, non-partisan research and advocacy organization that tracks the role of money in Texas politics.