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INTERNAL REVIEW OF CONTACTS WITH THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER REGARDING THE CONGRESSMAN MARK FOLEY MATTER

On Friday, September 29, the Speaker directed his Chief of Staff and Outside Counsel to conduct an internal review to determine the facts and circumstances surrounding contact with the Office of the Speaker regarding the Congressman Mark Foley matter. The following is their preliminary report.

Email Exchange Between Congressman Foley and a Constituent of Congressman Alexander

In the fall of 2005 Tim Kennedy, a staff assistant in the Speaker's Office, received a telephone call from Congressman Rodney Alexander's Chief of Staff who indicated that he had an email exchange between Congressman Foley and a former House page. He did not reveal the specific text of the email but expressed that he and Congressman Alexander were concerned about it.

Tim Kennedy immediately discussed the matter with his supervisor, Mike Stokke, Speaker Hastert's Deputy Chief of Staff. Stokke directed Kennedy to ask Ted Van Der Meid, the Speaker's in house Counsel, who the proper person was for Congressman Alexander to report a problem related to a former page. Ted Van Der Meid told Kennedy it was the Clerk of the House who should be notified as the responsible House Officer for the page program. Later that day Stokke met with Congressman Alexander's Chief of Staff. Once again the specific content of the email was not discussed. Stokke called the Clerk and asked him to come to the Speaker's Office so that he could put him together with Congressman Alexander's Chief of Staff. The Clerk and Congressman Alexander's Chief of Staff then went to the Clerk's Office to discuss the matter.

The Clerk asked to see the text of the email. Congressman Alexander's office declined citing the fact that the family wished to maintain as much privacy as possible and simply wanted the contact to stop. The Clerk asked if the email exchange was of a sexual nature and was assured it was not. Congressman Alexander's Chief of Staff characterized the email exchange as over-friendly.

The Clerk then contacted Congressman Shimkus, the Chairman of the Page Board to request an immediate meeting. It appears he also notified Van Der Meid that he had received the complaint and was taking action. This is entirely consistent with what he would normally expect to occur as he was the Speaker's Office liaison with the Clerk's Office.

(MORE, MORE, MORE)

The Clerk and Congressman Shimkus met and then immediately met with Foley to discuss the matter. They asked Foley about the email. Congressman Shimkus and the Clerk made it clear that to avoid even the appearance of impropriety and at the request of the parents, Congressman Foley was to immediately cease any communication with the young man.

The Clerk recalls that later that day he encountered Van Der Meid on the House floor and reported to him that he and Shimkus personally had spoken to Foley and had taken corrective action.

Mindful of the sensitivity to the parent's wishes to protect their child's privacy and believing that they had promptly reported what they knew to the proper authorities Kennedy, Van Der Meid and Stokke did not discuss the matter with others in the Speaker's Office.

Congressman Tom Reynolds in a statement issued today indicates that many months later, in the spring of 2006, he was approached by Congressman Alexander who mentioned the Foley issue from the previous fall. During a meeting with the Speaker he says he noted the issue which had been raised by Alexander and told the Speaker that an investigation was conducted by the Clerk of the House and Shimkus. While the Speaker does not explicitly recall this conversation, he has no reason to dispute Congressman Reynold's recollection that he reported to him on the problem and its resolution.

Sexually Explicit Instant Message Transcript

No one in the Speaker's Office was made aware of the sexually explicit text messages which press reports suggest had been directed to another individual until they were revealed in the press and on the internet this week. In fact, no one was ever made aware of any sexually explicit email or text messages at any time.

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