

March 20, 2007

Dear Colleague:

As you are aware, new rules were passed in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress to provide greater transparency in the earmark process. Although our committee has established an online procedure to accept requests for earmarks and to attach the certification of “no financial interest” to each request, many Members have expressed concern about the lack of clear guidance on the definition of “financial interest.”

The requirement for Members to certify they have no financial interest in the earmarks they request is part of the Code of Official Conduct in the House rules so the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct would be responsible for the issuance of such guidance. Unfortunately, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct was not able to make their guidelines known to the House until yesterday. I expect that even after these guidelines are reviewed, Members will have additional questions that will need to be addressed.

**In light of this, Members who wish to make any changes to their requests will be allowed to do so until Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the subcommittee limitations on the number of requests allowed to be made per Member will be removed. Individual Members will still need to enter their earmark request in the Committee’s database and file disclosures for each earmark request, whether it is an individual or group request. Programmatic requests do not require a disclosure and will not need to be entered into the Committee’s database.**

Please contact Jay Sivulich at 5-2718 if you have any technical questions concerning the submission of earmark requests or if you wish to amend any request already submitted. Please note that any changes to requests already submitted may necessitate re-entering all of a Member’s requests for that subcommittee. Please contact Lesley Turner at 5-2771, or the relevant subcommittee, if you have any questions about the Committee’s policy on earmarks.

Sincerely,

/s

David R. Obey  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations