

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 29, 2006

The Honorable Bill Frist  
Senate Majority Leader  
U.S. Capitol, Room S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Democratic Leader  
U.S. Capitol, Room S-221  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Frist and Leader Reid:

Today we will introduce a Senate Resolution that incorporates, virtually word for word, seven of the changes to the Senate Rules included in S. 2349, the lobbying reform bill that passed the Senate on March 29, 2006, by a vote of 90-8. A list of these changes is attached for your convenience.

We voted against S. 2349 because that bill failed to deal with some of the most serious problems with the Senate's own rules that have come to light over the past year of lobbying scandals. Nonetheless, S. 2349 did contain some important changes to the Senate Rules concerning the personal behavior of Senators and their relationships with lobbyists that should make a difference and that we support.

As you know, the rules changes contained in S. 2349 are not yet in effect, nearly three months after the bill passed, because they are contained in legislation that must still go through conference and be signed into law by the President. In fact, as many press reports have noted in recent weeks, the fate of lobbying reform is, at best, uncertain. The House has not yet even appointed conferees, and numerous disputes over earmarks and campaign finance provisions threaten the bill's final enactment.

The fate of the overall lobbying reform effort need not delay or block the new ethics rules the Senate has already passed and that do not need to be signed into law. We believe that the Senate should put new ethics rules in place immediately, and our resolution provides the means for it to do so.

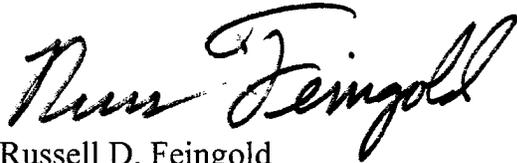
We respectfully request that you support our resolution to adopt amendments to the Senate Rules. All of these changes have already received extensive committee and floor consideration. There is no need for further hearings, committee action, or floor

debate. Indeed, our resolution can and should be discharged from the Rules Committee and adopted by unanimous consent as soon as the Senate returns from the July 4<sup>th</sup> recess.

We look forward to working with you on this matter so that the improvements in the Senate's ethics rules approved in March can take effect promptly, regardless of the result of the ongoing negotiations over lobbying reform legislation.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Russell D. Feingold  
United States Senate



Barack Obama  
United States Senate

## **Senate Rules Changes Passed in S. 2349 and Included in Feingold-Obama Resolution**

- **Floor Privileges:** Amends Rule XXIII to deny floor privileges to former Members of Congress and congressional officials who are (1) registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal; or (2) are employed by or represent any party or organization to influence, directly, or indirectly, the passage, defeat, or amendment of any legislative proposal. (Section 105.)
- **Gift Ban:** Amends Rule XXXV to exclude gifts from lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal from the gift ban exceptions for gifts of under \$50 (this would essentially eliminate meals and tickets from lobbyists). (Section 106.)
- **Travel:** Amends paragraph 2 of rule XXXV to require Members, officers, and employees of the Senate to gain pre-approval from the Ethics Committee for any trip. To obtain that approval, the trip taker must certify that transportation or lodging is not financed by, arranged by, or provided at the request of a lobbyist or foreign agent, and that no lobbyist arranged or is attending the trip. It also requires that all meetings and events during such travel (with an exception for national security cases), and all non-commercial air travel, must be disclosed to the Committee, and posted on the Member's official website within 30 days of the end of the travel. (Section 107.)
- **Revolving Door:** Amends Rule XXXVII to provide that during the one-year "cooling-off period" after leaving such position, any employee on the staff of a Member or on the staff of a committee whose rate of pay is equal to or greater than 75% of a Member's pay rate may not lobby *any* member, officer, or employee of the entire Senate. (Section 108.)
- **Prospective Employment:** Amends Rule XXXVII to prohibit a Senator from directly negotiating or having any arrangement concerning prospective private employment until after the election for his or her successor has been held, unless such Member files a statement with the Secretary, for public disclosure, regarding such negotiations and arrangements within three business days after they commence. (Section 109.)
- **Family Members who are lobbyists:** Amends Rule XXXVII to require a Senator to prohibit his or her staff from having official contact with the spouse or immediate family members of that Senator if the family member is a registered lobbyist. (Section 110.)
- **Hiring:** Amends Rule XLIII to provide that no Member shall attempt to influence on the basis of partisan affiliation the employment practice or hiring decision of any private entity by acting, offering or threatening to take or influence an official act. (Section 111.)