

LES AUCOIN
1st District, Oregon



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

Dear Colleague:

The decision to pull H.R. 1, the Ethics in Government bill, from floor consideration in the House this week is most disturbing to me. I intend to express my concern to Speaker O'Neill and would appreciate it if you join me in signing the letter.

My concern is simply this: No voting on this issue gives the appearance that Congress is wobbling on self-reform. A newspaper in my district, in commenting on the decision to pull H.R. 1 from the calendar, said:

"Congress, delirious with reform fever, jabbed itself with a sharp stick last year. Now, with the ague subsiding, the ache is setting in.

Remember the way it was last spring? Americans had only tentatively lowered their hands from their noses following the stench of Watergate when the aroma of pay-off and sex scandals began emanating from Capitol Hill.

Add to that the clamor over a \$12,000 pay raise congressman had just awarded themselves and it's easy to understand how they might be panicked into doing something drastically redemptive.

What they did was to inflict upon themselves stringent new codes of ethics . . .

The move quieted a bit of the restlessness back home, but as the time draws near to pay the price, some solons are becoming more and more convinced that Congress poked itself too hard."

The Christian Science Monitor was even blunter in a story which begun, "Are 'ethics' and 'reform' becoming dirty words on Capitol Hill?"

Many who ran for re-election pledging to press the reform movement in Congress want to be able to stand up and be counted as not retreating. That's why I believe it is mandatory to bring this legislation to the floor for a vote, regardless of head counts. Let the majority work its will, and if the legislation should be defeated, let the public know who favored it and who opposed it.

If you would like to co-sign the letter below to the Speaker, please call Heather at 5-0855, by May 2.

Dear Mr. Speaker:

We are very concerned that the decision to pull H.R. 1 from consideration on the House floor is being widely interpreted as a fading enthusiasm by the Congress in reforming itself. Nothing describes the situation better than the headline in April 26's Christian Science Monitor which says, "Ethics drive losing steam in Congress/ As Watergate fades, rigors of rules chafe."

We understand that there may not be enough votes to pass this bill. But we would like you to reconsider and reschedule a vote on H.R. 1 so that the public at least will be able to know who supports this reform and who opposes it. The public deserves to know this and members who feel strongly about this reform deserve an opportunity to go on record in favor of it.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Les AuCoin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

LES AUCOIN
Member of Congress