



Task Force Criticizes House Leadership for Placing Its Political Interests Above the Interests of Congressional Pages

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The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force today criticized U.S. House leadership for placing its political interests above the interests of congressional pages, as demonstrated by the growing scandal involving former Rep. Mark Foley, who is under FBI investigation for salacious e-mail exchanges with at least one teenage page.

"Given similar past sordid situations in the page program perpetrated by male members of Congress against female pages, it's absurd to blame the Foley spectacle on his being gay, closeted or otherwise. Given the fact that the current Republican leadership in the House has never hesitated to attack gay people, it's even more absurd for people like Newt Gingrich to say the reason they didn't take prompt action was because they didn't want to be accused of 'gay bashing.' Cut me a break.

"What's clear is that the House leadership elevated holding onto a seat above the interests of young people in the page system. And they want to talk about 'moral values'? Please."

When asked on FOX News Sunday with Chris Wallace why top Republican House leaders said nothing despite knowing for months that Rep. Mark Foley had sent inappropriate e-mails to at least one teenage page, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich remarked: "I think, had they overly aggressively reacted to the initial round, they would have also been accused of gay bashing."

Family Research Council President Tony Perkins, as quoted in an Oct. 3 story on CNSNews.com: "[The House GOP leadership] discounted or downplayed earlier reports concerning Foley's behavior -- probably because they did not want to appear 'homophobic.' The Foley scandal shows what happens when political correctness is put ahead of protecting children."