



## Senate Ethics Committee Urged to Drop Craig Investigation

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**The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force delivered a letter to the Senate Ethics Committee yesterday, saying that the rush to investigate Republican Sen. Larry Craig while not taking such action against GOP Sens. David Vitter and Ted Stevens is "hypocrisy tinged with homophobia."**

**Multiple publications have reported on the letter, which was written by NGLTF Executive Director Matt Foreman.** The Idaho Statesman reported in an online posting updated today that Sen. Craig, arrested last summer for allegedly soliciting sex from an undercover police officer in a Minneapolis airport men's room, told The Idaho Statesman that he did not know about the letter from the nation's earliest GLBT equality group, but that he agreed with their urging of Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and Sen. John Cornyn (R-Tex.), who sit on the Ethics Committee, to drop the investigation.

The Idaho Statesman reported that Craig told that publication, "I would hope they'd do that."

Senate Republicans rushed to pressure Craig to resign following last summer's disclosure that Craig had pled guilty to the charge. By contrast, Louisiana Sen. David Vitter, whose phone number was among those found in the possession of an alleged Washington, D.C., madam, and who was also alleged by a New Orleans woman convicted of running a brothel to have used her services, was greeted with an ovation from his fellow Republicans when he issued an apology at a luncheon.

Nor has Alaska Republican Sen. Ted Stevens, the longest-serving GOP member of the Senate, been investigated by the Ethics Committee or pressured to resign, following allegations of corruption stemming from an extensive home remodeling project that was linked to an oil field service company, VECO, two executives of which pled guilty last May to federal charges including bribery and conspiracy.

Senate Republicans say that the difference in how Craig has been treated boils down to Craig having entered a plea of guilty in connection with charges stemming from the alleged incident in the Minneapolis airport men's room. Vitter, said Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ken.), did not plead guilty; moreover, Vitter's alleged improprieties arose from a time when Vitter was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, before he joined the Senate, the Idaho Statesman reported.

As for Stevens, McConnell said, the Alaska Senator has not even been criminally charged, although his home was searched by agents from the IRS and the FBI last summer.

**Stated Foreman, "We've been disturbed for quite some time at the very disparate and contradictory treatment of Senator Craig and Senator Vitter," reported The Idaho Statesman.**

**Foreman continued, "You have Senator Vitter, when he returned to Congress, he was received with thunderous applause, and Senator Craig was treated as a pariah. What message does that send? A man having sex with a female prostitute is OK? But a completely nonsexual episode in a restroom is just horrific? What does that say about the Senate's values?"**

Observers of the rush to see Craig removed have speculated that the Republicans have another motive: whereas Vitter or Stevens might be replaced by a Democrat were they to step aside, Craig's post would be filled by another Republican.

The Idaho Statesman reported that Cornyn said he knew about the letter from NGLTF, but that he was not able to comment on the ongoing investigation.

Cornyn did say, however, that while "nothing publicly has come to light" as the result of the Ethics Committee's probe, that reporters should "stay tuned."