

May 27, 2003

Andrew H. Card Jr.
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Card:

As you know, the past several days have seen an increasing number of disturbing revelations about efforts to enlist the help of federal officials in locating Democratic Texas legislators who had left their State as part of an ongoing redistricting dispute with Republican State legislators. The Department of Homeland Security has already acknowledged receiving a request for such help – reportedly under false pretenses – and expending precious homeland security resources in response. Congressman Tom DeLay has now confirmed that his office contacted two federal agencies – the Justice Department and the Federal Aviation Administration – in response to requests for federal assistance in this matter.

It is completely unacceptable that any government official would think it appropriate to use federal taxpayer dollars to help one political party settle an intra-State partisan feud. I have already asked the Department of Homeland Security to investigate the misuse of its resources and am today asking the Departments of Transportation and Justice to conduct similar investigations. I am writing to ask you, as Chief of Staff to the President, to ensure that we have a complete picture of what happened, by determining whether any White House officer or employee or any officer or employee of any federal agency was contacted by anyone seeking information about or federal assistance in Texas' search for Democratic legislators and whether any White House officer or employee or any federal agency officer or employee did anything in response to any such contact that occurred. If there were any such contacts, I would appreciate your providing me with a list of such contacts, who participated in them, when they occurred, the nature of the discussions and what, if any, action was taken as a result of them. If any White House official or employee contacted other federal agencies or employees on this issue, I would also like the same information about those contacts.

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I am sure that you join me in believing federal resources – particularly homeland security resources at a time of heightened national alert – must remain off-limits from those engaging in partisan political disputes. I would appreciate your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Joseph I. Lieberman
Ranking Member