

May 27, 2003

Glenn A. Fine  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 4322  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Fine:

I am deeply troubled by recent news reports that Congressman Tom DeLay has admitted that his office contacted officials in the Department of Justice in an effort to enlist their assistance in dealing with a local political dispute in his home state of Texas.

As I am sure you are aware, on May 12, 2003, a number of Democratic state legislators absented themselves from the Texas state house, and the Republican Speaker of the Texas House took aggressive actions to track them down, including ordering the Texas Department of Public Safety to find and bring in the missing legislators. The Department of Public Safety, among other things, contacted an office in the Department of Homeland Security to obtain assistance in this search. Moreover, on May 14, 2003 a commander in the Texas Department of Public Safety ordered documents and other materials related to the search to be destroyed.

It has now been revealed that, in addition to the actions of the legislative leadership and the Department of Public Safety, Rep. DeLay also took part in the efforts to round up the missing legislators. In particular, according to reports in the *Dallas Morning News*, *Houston Chronicle* and *Washington Post*, Rep. DeLay has admitted that his office contacted the Justice Department on May 12, 2003, to see if the Department could assist in finding and returning the missing legislators. These actions raise serious questions about whether federal government resources were used, or sought to be used, to support one side in a local partisan political dispute.

In light of these reports, I ask that you conduct a full investigation into this matter and that, in particular, you provide me with the following information:

1. A list of all calls or other contacts between Rep. DeLay (or his staff) or any other person and any Justice Department employee seeking either assistance or information concerning the missing Texas legislators, including who initiated and received the call or contact, when the contact was made, and the substance of the contact.

2. A description of any actions the Justice Department or any of its employees took as a result of any contact listed in response to Item 1.
3. If any action was taken by any Justice Department employee, whether and to what extent the action was appropriate and within the mission of the Department.
4. To the extent any action by an employee of the Justice Department was inappropriate, the steps that are being taken to ensure that this does not happen again.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Beth Grossman of my staff at (202) 224-9256.

Sincerely,

Joseph I. Lieberman  
Ranking Member