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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 11, 2007

Honorable Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to request documents related to political interference with the work of the Office of the Surgeon General.

Yesterday, the Committee held a hearing on the Surgeon General's Vital Mission: Challenges for the Future. At the hearing, Dr. Richard Carmona, the most recent Surgeon General, testified that during his term, political appointees edited his public remarks, blocked him from developing or issuing several reports or calls to action, and denied travel requests on political grounds.

To assist the Committee in its investigation of these events, I request that you provide the following:

1. All documents related to the Surgeon General's report on global health;
2. All documents related to the Surgeon General's report on prison health;
3. All documents related to the Surgeon General's proposed reports on mental health preparedness and on emergency preparedness;
4. All documents relating to requests for Dr. Carmona to speak at events outside the Department, including events for other government agencies or the White House. Please indicate whether the request was accepted or denied; and
5. All travel requests submitted by Dr. Carmona, beginning in August 2002 through the end of his term. Please indicate whether the request was approved or denied.

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The Committee requests that you produce these documents on or before July 25, 2007.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee in the House of Representatives and has broad oversight jurisdiction as set forth in House Rule X. An attachment to this letter provides additional information about how to respond to the Committee's request.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact me or ask your staff to contact Art Kellermann or Naomi Seiler with the Committee staff at (202) 225-5056.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry A. Waxman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Henry A. Waxman
Chairman

Enclosure

cc: Tom Davis
Ranking Minority Member