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ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives
 Committee on Energy and Commerce
 Washington, DC 20515-6115

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April 19, 2001

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DAVID V. MARVENTANO, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable David Walker
 Comptroller General
 General Accounting Office
 441 G Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Walker:

Earlier this year, President Bush announced the establishment of a task force, to be chaired by Vice President Cheney, to help him develop an energy policy. It is our understanding that the task force has conducted a number of meetings since at least March 15, 2001, and some, if not all, of these meetings have included exclusive groups of non-governmental participants -- including political contributors -- to discuss specific policies, rules, regulations, and legislation. While we have never been provided with an official list of members of this task force, it is our understanding that these meetings took place at federal facilities with the participation of federal employees. We further understand that the meetings were conducted entirely in private.

We have become concerned about the conduct and composition of the task force. As Members of the House Committees with primary jurisdiction over federal energy policy and the conduct of the agencies responsible for implementing it, we question the apparent efforts of the task force to shield its membership and deliberations from public scrutiny.

The process of energy policy development needs sunshine. At a minimum, the public has the right to know who serves on this task force; what information is being presented to the task force and by whom it is being given; and to learn of the costs involved in the gathering of the facts.

To that end, we request you immediately undertake an investigation of the President's energy policy task force with special attention to the following matters:

- 1) A complete list of all task force members and staff, including name, title, office, or employer represented. In addition:

- a) please identify each member or staff who is not a full-time employee of the federal government and cite the hours per week that person works for the federal government and date on which that person began working for the federal government;
 - b) please identify each task force member or staff who, at the time of any task force meeting, was serving as a contractor to, or temporary full-time employee of, the federal government while on leave from non-federal employment. For each member or staff identified, please include the name of that person's non-federal employer and the dates on which that person began working for the federal government and ceased receiving remuneration from their non-federal job.
- 2) A complete list of all task force meetings held, including the date, location, and duration of each meeting.
 - 3) An accounting of the statutory authorities, regulations, rules, and guidelines pursuant to which the task force was organized and conducts its business.
 - 4) For each task force meeting that has occurred to date, a complete accounting of all attendees at each meeting. Please include the name of each attendee as well as the name of each person's employer and the name of all clients represented by each person for the purpose of any particular task force meeting.
 - 5) Copies of all notices of task force meetings provided to the general public.
 - 6) An accounting of the number of task force meetings open to the general public.
 - 7) Identification of the person or persons responsible for determining which non-federal employees would be invited to participate in each meeting.
 - 8) The criteria used by the task force in determining which non-federal entities would be invited to participate in these meetings or excluded from the meetings.
 - 9) Copies of all invitations to participate in task force deliberations and phone records relating to such invitations.
 - 10) An accounting of all direct and indirect costs incurred by the task force to date.

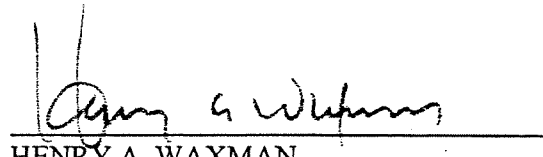
The Honorable David Walker
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Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about this request, please contact us or have your staff contact Rick Kessler of the Committee on Energy and Commerce Minority staff at 226-3400 or Paul Weinberger of the Committee on Government Reform Minority staff at 225-5420.

Sincerely,



JOHN D. DINGELL
RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE



HENRY A. WAXMAN
RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

cc: The Honorable W. J. "Billy" Tauzin, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Dan Burton, Chairman
Committee on Government Reform