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ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT

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September 22, 1997

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Henry:

Thank you for your letter of August 14 regarding procedures for briefing Members of the Committee about the ongoing investigation. Your proposal has a great deal of merit. My staff has consulted with the Parliamentarian's office and the Rules Committee regarding this matter. Based on these consultations, I believe that the following points outline procedures that would comply with House rules and, I hope, be acceptable to all Members of the Committee:

- Committee staff may inform Committee Members orally or in writing about depositions or interrogatories conducted by the Committee, or about materials covered under the document protocol.
- Each Committee Member may designate in writing one staff person from the Member's personal office to be a liaison to the Committee. Designated staff may receive oral or written briefings from Committee staff regarding the Committee's investigation. Designated staff may also review, in Committee offices, deposition transcripts, responses to interrogatories, or documents covered by the Committee's document protocol for the express purpose of informing Members about the progress of the Committee's investigation.
- Designated personal office staff may not review depositions, interrogatories or other information that contain classified material.

- Designated staff shall be advised that under Committee Rule 20 and House Rule XI, evidence or testimony taken in executive session may only be released to the public with the express consent of the Committee. Designated liaison staff shall be instructed that executive session material or material covered by the document protocol may only be shared with Committee Members or Committee staff.

- Deposition transcripts and other executive session material generally may not be removed from Committee offices unless the Committee has voted to release them. A deposition transcript may be delivered to a Committee Member's personal office only under the following limited circumstances;
 - a.) It is requested for review by the Member, not the staff.
 - b.) It is logged out, and then logged back in upon its return.
 - c.) It is returned within 48 hours.
 - d.) Copies are not made of the transcript or any portion of it.
 - e.) A physical copy of the transcript is provided, and it is not delivered electronically.

The Parliamentarian's office advises that these procedures may be instituted upon agreement between the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member. They have advised that this agreement should be ratified by the Committee with a unanimous consent agreement at the next committee business meeting.

If this outline is acceptable to you, I believe that we can implement this agreement immediately. Thank you again for your constructive proposal. These procedures should make it easier to keep all Committee Members better informed about the Committee's activities.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Burton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D".

Dan Burton
Chairman

cc: Members, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight