



**The Honorable Linda Sanchez
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law
Meeting to consider the Executive Privilege claims asserted by White House Counsel in
response to the subpoena for the production of documents issued to Joshua Bolten, White
House Chief of Staff, or appropriate custodian of records.
July 19, 2007**

I am profoundly troubled that the White House has chosen to disregard the subpoena for documents regarding the firing of the U.S. Attorneys and the potential politicization of the U.S. Department of Justice. Through our patient and good-faith efforts to negotiate with the White House on this matter, we have been trying to avoid a constitutional confrontation between the executive and legislative branches. The White House could have prevented an escalation by engaging in reasonable negotiations. While I am hopeful the White House will reconsider its hardline position, it has, thus far, chosen a path of confrontation instead of cooperation.

The issuance of the subpoena to the White House was a necessary last resort for an investigation that will finally allow the American people to learn the truth about what happened. Although this subcommittee respects executive privilege as a safeguard for internal deliberations on the legitimate creation of policy, such a claim must be used judiciously and not to prevent necessary oversight into potential abuse of power or political misconduct.

It is Congress's responsibility to provide oversight of the executive branch and to enforce the system of checks and balances to make sure each branch of government is accountable. We take that obligation very seriously. And accordingly, it is our obligation to obtain the truth about the decision to fire these prosecutors and the administration's subsequent representation of the matter. Accountability in each branch of government is imperative in restoring the trust and faith of the American people.