

7/31/2007 - Sires Votes For Transparency In Government

The Honest Leadership Open Government Act imposes tough lobbying reform

For Immediate Release

Contact: Olga Alvarez

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(201) 222-2828

(Washington, D.C.) - Today, Congressman Albio Sires kept one of the first commitments he made upon his arrival in Washington: ethics reform. S. 1, the Honest Leadership, Open Government Act of 2007, received overwhelming bipartisan support and was passed by a vote of 411 to 8.

"Our constituents need to know that our votes in congress truly are a reflection of their voice, and not the product of contributions to our campaigns or parties held in our honor," said Congressman Sires.

This legislation addresses important concerns and breaks the link between lobbyists, legislators and their employees by prohibiting lobbyists from providing gifts and meals to members of Congress and their staff. It requires a cooling off period before a former officer, employee or elected official of the legislative or executive branch can lobby an agency or department where they have worked. It also prohibits former members from lobbying Congress for one year after they leave office.

In addition, the Honest Leadership, Open Government Act offers transparency by establishing an online searchable database and demanding that lobbying disclosure reports be filed electronically. It also doubles the frequency of these disclosures to four times a year.

"This legislation will go a long way to improving the transparency in lobbying activities and distancing the ties between legislators and lobbyists," said Congressman Sires.

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