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Joan Claybrook, President

May 3, 2006

Contact: Angela Bradbery (202) 588-7741

Craig Holman (202) 454-5182

## **Lawmakers Put “For Sale” Sign Back Outside the House – Chance for Real Lobbying Reform Missed as House of Representatives Passes Sham Bill**

### *Statement of Public Citizen President Joan Claybrook*

Today lawmakers put the “for sale” sign back outside the House of Representatives. After months of debating lobbying reform, the House passed an even weaker version than the Senate, hoping that the public would be fooled by a sham bill that does nothing to address the influence-peddling and corruption that has been festering in Congress. Despite the outcry for reform, this bill does nothing to disclose lobbying contacts, nothing to create independent ethics enforcement, nothing to limit congressional travel on corporate jets at cut-rate prices, and nothing to slow the revolving door for members of Congress, their staff and executive branch officials.

Jack Abramoff will be just the tip of the iceberg if real reform is not implemented. This bill would mean business as usual for lobbyists and lawmakers alike. All of the abuses in the Abramoff scandal – the free dinners, campaign contributions and fundraisers provided by lobbyists – would still be permissible if this bill passes. It appears that lawmakers would rather live like rock stars, whisked away to exotic locales on corporate-funded jets, than do the people’s business. The House is betting that voters will have forgotten about the lobbying abuses and congressional ethics scandals come November. The American people should show them differently and hold this Congress accountable on Election Day.

The final vote of 217-to-213 against lobbying reform is extremely disappointing, but Public Citizen wants to thank the 20 Republican members who bucked their leadership and joined nearly all Democrats to vote against this sham bill.

1600 20<sup>th</sup> Street NW • Washington, DC 20009 • (202) 588-1000 • [www.citizen.org](http://www.citizen.org)

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