

**Campaign Legal Center · CREW · Common Cause
Democracy 21 · Public Citizen · U.S. PIRG**

May 8, 2013

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Support the “Foreign Travel Cost Disclosure Act” (H.R. 1359)

Dear Representative:

Our organizations – Campaign Legal Center, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), Common Cause, Democracy 21, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG – encourage you to join as a co-sponsor and support passage of the “Foreign Travel Cost Disclosure Act” (H.R. 1359), introduced by Rep. Walter Jones (R-N.C.).

This measure would bring important transparency to both lawmakers and the public of the cost of using military aircraft for official congressional travel. It does not impede such travel in any way, nor does it impose any restrictions on the use of military aircraft for congressional travel. Instead, H.R. 1359 would require that the Secretary of Defense provide an estimate of the cost of the use of military aircraft to those involved in the official travel and the House and Senate Committee on Armed Services. The cost would also be made public on the Secretary’s web site.

Official travel for Members and staff is an important educational experience for Congress. And in many cases official congressional travel on military aircraft is both necessary and prudent given time considerations, accessibility of destinations and security. However, travel by military aircraft is both expensive and a burden on military resources.

Members and staff are usually unaware of the cost of using military aircraft. While most other aspects of the cost of foreign travel are reported to Congress and the public, the cost of the use of military aircraft is not disclosed.

In this era of fiscal restraint, which also has dramatically impacted the military, it is important that Members and staff be informed of these costs in order to determine whether the use of military aircraft is the most cost effective means of transportation.

Our organizations urge swift passage of H.R. 1359. This is a measure that all parties should be able to agree upon.

Sincerely,

Campaign Legal Center
CREW
Common Cause

Democracy 21
Public Citizen
U.S. PIRG