



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2005

Congress Awash In Sleazy Junkets

by Michael in New York on [4/27/2005 10:21:00 AM](#)

USA Today reports that **privately financed travel by Congressmen and Senators has totaled about 5400 trips in the last five years** -- half of them paid by non-profits who don't need to disclose who is paying the bills. The total cost of these private junkets? About \$16 million.

For a government that spends billions of dollars, is it really necessary to ransom our politicians' souls for a measley \$16 million just so they can cozy up to big business and take nice golfing trips?

Here's an easy fix: ban ALL travel financed by outside groups of any nature. If you are a Congressman or Senator you CANNOT accept any travel -- not a private jet to Scotland to hit the links; not a taxi down the street.

Create an annual slush fund for travel for these politicians, divide it up evenly, with more for seniority and more for heads of committees, who'd presumably need to travel more. Let them spend the money as they will, be it vacation or fact-finding mission, but EVERY SINGLE TRIP will be detailed and every one will be reported annually by law to their constituents, including price, length and purpose of stay and so on. Once they're spending OUR tax money, see how often they go on that "fact-finding" trip to London or Fiji, with money spent on golf and tennis and scuba diving. Since lobbyists and non-profits would be BANNED from giving them these gifts, it would be one less source of sleaze in our government.

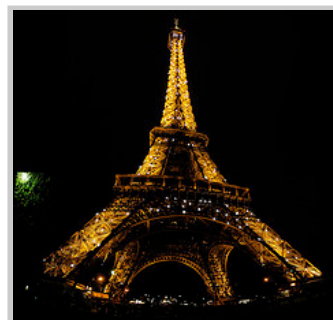


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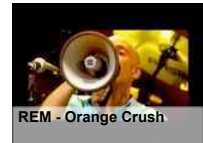
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