

Discrimination of black caucus

Life



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Disproportionate cases of ethics within the Black Caucus

Currently, the congressional black caucus has a multitude of cases against them versus the Caucasian caucus. African American Lawmakers want to figure out why. African Americans make up about 10 percent of the house. The prime issues at point, one third of the black caucus were being investigated by the House Ethics Committee. Only two members of Congress have been formally charged with ethics violations in recent years and have faced the specter of public trials.

Emanuel Cleaver, a Methodist minister and the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, stood up and began searching his desk for a Bible. Cleaver wasn't looking up a particular verse or Psalm. He grabbed the Good Book for emphasis. He wanted to hold it in his hands as he declared, with a firm shake, that the way Congress investigates the ethics of its own lawmakers is horribly broken. " I think," Cleaver said, " the facts speak for themselves."

The facts say this: African-Americans make up 10 percent of the House, but as of the end of February, five of the sitting six named lawmakers under review by the House Ethics Committee are black. The pattern isn't new. At one point in late 2009, seven lawmakers were known to be involved in formal House ethics inquiries; all were members of the Congressional Black Caucus. An eighth caucus member, Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. of Illinois, had also been under investigation, but his probe was halted temporarily while the Justice Department undertook an inquiry of its own.

All told, about one-third of sitting black lawmakers have been named in an ethics probe during their careers, according to a National Journal review.

Congressional ethics cases do not develop in a vacuum. In the House, probes can begin in two ways. The secretive House Ethics Committee, run by equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans, can initiate an inquiry. Or the newer Office of Congressional Ethics, an independent prosecutor of sorts created by then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Democrat of California, as part of her pledge to “ drain the swamp” in Washington, can refer a case to the Ethics Committee.

The two panels are supposed to work in tandem. Behind the scenes, however, they have tussled in a bureaucratic turf war over who are the Hill’s real corruption cops. Privately, veterans of both panels blame the other for the skewed racial statistics. Ethics Committee loyalists say that nearly all of the cases involving black lawmakers that they have investigated came from Office of Congressional Ethics referrals. For their part, backers of that office note with suspicion that the Ethics Committee has dropped or quickly resolved many of their cases involving white members, while those against African-Americans have lingered or resulted in penalties.

The Office of Congressional Ethics lacks subpoena power and can mete out no punishment, but it has another tool that has proved in many ways as potent: Its findings are made public. Watchdogs and ethics reformers have hailed the office for lifting the veil of secrecy on what has long been an insular process dominated by lawmakers resistant to policing their own colleagues. But it is in naming names that the Office of Congressional Ethics

has drawn scrutiny. Since its inception, the office has recommended that the Ethics Committee undertake further investigations in 26 cases involving sitting House members. (Retrieved from Saturday, March 3, 2012 edition of National Journal).

Republican Allen West, Republican of Florida., the only Republican member of the Congressional Black Caucus, offered little sympathy to his colleagues under review. “ When I commanded a battalion, if you had a certain platoon that had some issues, you didn’t say that you were picking on that platoon. Maybe there were some issues in that platoon you had to look at,” the retired Army lieutenant colonel said (Retrieved from Saturday, March 3, 2012 edition of National Journal). This is something that is very important to what Republican Allen West stated. I feel and comprehend that what he is saying is basically regardless of your race, gender or nationality, you must work as a team, as he stated about a platoon. It is very difficult, but as I have learned in this course, there are inequities in adult education and training, there may be a lack of standardization, but ultimately, we have to work together as a unit to make our country better. My recommendations would be to try and equalize the races as best we can within congress, based on being qualified or similar work experience qualifications and work as a team versus fighting amongst one another. Ethics and equality are very important areas that need to be looked at seriously, which in some cases we do and some we don’t.

Finally, new cases of ethics may begin to balance out the prior cases, but the public perception is still about half and half on this issue. With this being said, it is easy to say we need to fix this, but time, money and hearts will be <https://assignbuster.com/discrimination-of-black-caucus/>

broken while this is being done. Cases like this will continue as we do not live in a perfect world. I wish we did so that there are less issues and happier Americans.