

# Congressional ethics violations

[History](#)



Full Congressional Ethics Violations The modern world now faces an increase in crime rates not only among ordinary citizens but in the respected and trusted offices of the government as well where positions were given through the power of the people to politicians who sought the different offices. Considering the Office of Representatives for instance, more and more members of the congress are being found guilty of crimes. In comparison with the statistics of crimes in general, it could be said that both are taking a steep rise as the years go by. Everyday, crimes of different forms are published on newspapers and broadcasted over the radio or television. In a similar manner, crimes committed in the congress are made known and so many times, such cases are excessively publicized that it is taking the attention of many people, leading them to discussions that may last for weeks, resulting to a most tragic end, the lose of trust in the institution as a whole. Could this be a cause of the increase in crime rates? On a personal note, it is observed and believed by this writer that ethical behaviors in congress affect the thinking and actions of most people. For example, learning that this congressman pocketed a sumptuous amount of dollars or that representative raped a young woman; makes people hold lesser respect in the system and in the politicians. Sometimes, it affects people's behaviors, driving them to act against the laws because the very people they trusted are not as ethical as was expected. In fact, even the House of Representatives are well aware about this so that in the midst of such scandals, the code of ethics was formed to establish the confidence of people in the integrity of the processes (Herrick 43), assuring them that in case of misconduct, public officials are certainly to be punished accordingly. Although this move does not ascertain the attainment of the objective as <https://assignbuster.com/congressional-ethics-violations/>

shown in the statistics of crime rates in modern politics, the efforts shown in clinging to the rules and regulations of most of the politicians is already worth considering as an achievement. It is true that people's expectations from congressmen and senators have constantly been changing, leading to 'mediated political corruption' (Gilman), making the dilemma faced by politicians more challenging. However, Gilman takes note that instead of having the politicians be more sensitive to the demands of the people, they seem to have been calloused and insensitive instead. For instance, he mentions that leniency in the office towards accepting meals and gifts for the congressmen and their staff is now tolerated as more issues arise from such discussions. The house sometimes becomes more of a circus than a reputable office of educated people because of such debates where pointing of fingers arise and demands of investigations are raised for one person to another, making the office lose its trustworthiness more and more. With such attitudes arising, it is therefore a good thing for the people to expect much from congress when it comes to ethical values so that when they are seated, they will always feel the pressure that is on them. Representatives should be 'above average' in their conduct and ethical principles for them to be able to uphold the integrity of the office they hold. Moreover, they should stand as good models to the people especially when it comes to public service, honesty and trustworthiness. When people expect too much from politicians, probably, the pressure that is placed on them will drive them to be extra careful in observing their behaviors inside and outside the office. If, on the other hand, no expectations are put on them, the government will most probably come up with a House of Representatives that are not just sloppy but are more than crooks. The house is indeed a place where temptations

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abound so that it is very important that the people to be placed there are of high ethical values as compared to most ordinary citizens. Having strong foundations in ethical principles will allow politicians to overcome temptations and maintain the integrity of the office. Although this is not an assurance that crimes will not be committed in the office, it brings a great possibility that the integrity and trustworthiness of the house will be well-guarded. For instance, when a politician commits mistakes, he could be expelled as in the case of James Traficant of Ohio in 2002, Michael Myers of Pennsylvania in 1980 and three others during the civil war (Murse). As in the case of the senators found guilty of crimes mentioned by the same author, they chose resigning before they were given their punishments. Such action could be attributed to shame which is most helpful in maintaining a good standard for the political offices. In such cases, the acceptance of the crime makes the individual take all the blame and frees his office and colleagues of any accusations that could place them all in shame. References Gilman, Stuart C. Government ehtics: If only angels were to govern! Business Library. 2003. Web. November 13, 2011. . Herrick, Rebekah. Fashioning the More Ethical Representative: The Impact of Ethics Reforms in the U. S. House of Representatives. USA: Praeger Publishers, 2003. Print. Murse, Tom. In Modern Times, Congress is Reluctant to Punish its Own: Historically, Talk of 'Draining the Swamp' Rings Hollow. Aboutus. com US Government Info. Nov. 16, 2010. Web. November 13, 2011. .